

COMPETITION!!!

Issue No. 603

June 2005

£3.50



POLISH FINISH, FINNISH POLISH

UK launch for all-Volvo coach



Takeover target:
Southern Vectis
for sale?

UK Coach Rally

Riding National Express

www.busesmag.com

SIX LONDON BUS DVDs TO BE WON!



BUSES

VOLUME 57 NO 603 JUNE 2005

Editor: Alan Millar e-mail: alan@millar1.demon.co.uk

Design: Debbie Walker

Contributions

Contributions: Please post or e-mail all articles, letters, press releases and colour photographs to the Editor. Information (not photographs) for Fleet News should be sent to the relevant author at the addresses shown in the regional sections for England & Wales, Scotland and Ireland. We are pleased to consider articles and suitable quality colour photographs for possible publication in *Buses*. Material accepted will be retained and paid for at our standard rates on publication. Items that cannot be used will be returned if accompanied by a stamped self-addressed envelope. Such material is provided at the contributor's own risk; we regret that Ian Allan Publishing Ltd cannot be held responsible for loss or damage howsoever caused.

We are happy to accept colour transparency, colour print and digital photographs. In all cases, we request that you supply your name, full postal address and subject details. These should be written clearly on the reverse of each colour print and on each transparency mount (to avoid the risk of details and photographs becoming separated). When sending digital photographs either by e-mail or on a CD, please provide these details on an accompanying text file along with an assertion of ownership of the copyright in the image(s) supplied. In no circumstances will the publisher reproduce digital images without the foregoing being provided. Digital images need to be high-resolution jpeg files. However, if you send these by e-mail, please send low-resolution scans in the first instance and we will let you know which ones to send in high-resolution format. To help us make a quick identification of pictures sent by CD, we would greatly appreciate at least a detailed list of the contents or, better still, a printout of thumbnail (or larger) images.

The opinions and views expressed by authors and contributors within *Buses* are not necessarily those of the Editor or Ian Allan Publishing Ltd.

Editorial Office: Buses, PO Box 3759, Glasgow, G41 5YN. Tel: 0141 427 6294. Fax: 0141 427 9594
e-mail: alan@millar1.demon.co.uk

www.busesmag.com

Advertising

Advertising Manager: David Lane

Tel: 01780 484632. Mob: 07795 031051. Fax: 01780 763388. e-mail: david.lane@ianallanpublishing.co.uk

Display Sales Representative: Kirsty Flatt

Tel: 01780 484634. Fax: 01780 763388. e-mail: kirsty.flatt@ianallanpublishing.co.uk

Classified Sales and Advertising Production: Caz Ingram

Tel: 01780 484630. Fax: 01780 763388. e-mail: caz.ingram@ianallanpublishing.co.uk

Advertising Office: Buses, Ian Allan Publishing Ltd, Foundry Road, Stamford, Lincolnshire PE9 2PP.

Reader Services

Subscriptions Manager: Vera West

Subscriptions Office: Buses Subscriptions, Ian Allan Publishing Ltd,

Riverdene Business Park, Molesey Road, Hersham, Surrey KT12 4RG. Tel: 01932 266622.

Fax/Overnight Answerphone: 01932 266633. e-mail: subs@ianallanpublishing.co.uk

Annual Subscriptions:

Home: £42.00. Europe: £48.00. Rest of World (economy airmail): £50.00.

Rest of World (first class airmail): £59.50

Refunds: We regret that all subscription refund requests are subject to a £5 administration charge.

Binders: Magazine binders available from Buses Subscriptions only £7.45 each post free to UK addresses, overseas orders please add £2.50 per binder. Please make cheques payable to Ian Allan Publishing Ltd.

Back Issues: Subject to availability. To avoid disappointment, check availability before you order.

Each copy costs cover price plus postage and packing: £1.00 UK; £2.00 mainland Europe; £2.50 Rest of World.

Mail Order Book Enquiries: MCP Mail Order, 4 Watling Drive, Hinckley, Leicestershire LE10 3EY. Tel: 01455 233747. Fax: 01455 233737. e-mail: midlandbooks@compuserve.com

Publishing

Chairman: David Allan

Managing Director: Tony Saunders

Publishing Manager: Paul Appleton

Production: Nicola Buckle, Roopal Shah



Buses is published on the third Friday of each month preceding the cover date by:

Publisher: Ian Allan Publishing Ltd, Hersham, Surrey KT12 4RG. Tel: 01932 266600. Fax: 01932 266601.

Registered Office: Terminal House, Shepperton, Middlesex TW17 8AS.

Origination/Printing: Ian Allan Printing Ltd, Hersham, Surrey KT12 4RG. estimates@ianallanprinting.co.uk

Distribution: Marketforce (UK) Ltd, 5th Floor, Low Rise Building, King's Reach Tower, Stamford Street, London SE1 9LS. Enquiries Line: 020 7633 3333

©Ian Allan Publishing Ltd 2005

All rights reserved. No part of this magazine may be reproduced or transmitted in any form by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording or by any information storage and retrieval system, without prior permission in writing from the copyright owner. Multiple copying of the contents of the magazine without prior written approval is not permitted.

ISSN: 0007-6392

Visit the Ian Allan Publishing website
www.ianallanpublishing.com

NEWS 5

Southern Vectis for sale; MAN's body plans; Stagecoach order

BUS PEOPLE 12

Alan Westwell retires; women take charge in the Midlands

GLOBAL NEWS 14

Rome trolleybuses start; Wellington revamp approved

INSIDE TRACK 16

Brian Cox says it's time to prove what buses can do

IN LONDON 18

Tone down for RM farewells; slow death of the 726

MILLAR'S TALES 20

Postcards, computer trouble and men in dark glasses

NEW SHAPE ON BRIGHTON SEAFRONT 22

The Turkish Temsa makes its debut at the UK Coach Rally

READER COMPETITION 26

Your chance to win a classic

London Bus DVD



TO DIGBETH, BEYOND AND BACK AGAIN 28

We sample three rides by National Express

FIRST OFF THE RAILS 31

The Manchester-based rail replacement operation

WHEN IRISH ASSETS ARE SWEATING 32

The lengths Bus Éireann takes for coaching efficiency

SERVICE EXTRA 34

Julian Osborne on glasses, managers and the Welsh border

PICTUREVIEW 36

Lerwick lament: a tribute to Gordon Jamieson

THE FENTON FILE 39

An ex-Manchester Olympian in the Lake District

REVIEWS 40

More of the latest books and diecast models

YOU WRITE 42

Drivers and passengers; dual doors; April Fools and anoraks

PUBLICITY MATTERS 47

Customer magazines in Brighton and Oxford

PRESERVATION UPDATE 49

The Irish Transport Trust rally; LT Museum shutdown

FLEET NEWS ENGLAND & WALES 50

Compiled by John G. Lidstone

THE COACH PARC 61

Ikarus bodies in the British Isles

FLEET NEWS SCOTLAND 62

Compiled by Sandy Macdonald

FLEET NEWS IRELAND 67

Compiled by G. Irvine Millar and Ian Molloy

THE EMISSIONS DILEMMA

As we reported last month, operators face a tough choice when the Euro4 exhaust emission standards take effect on new buses and coaches from next year. A choice between two forms of unfamiliar engine technology.

Do they go with 80% of manufacturers and specify selective catalytic reduction (SCR) or take the route being offered by MAN and Scania and opt for exhaust gas recirculation (EGR)? Do they gear themselves up to store and fill their vehicles with AdBlue exhaust treatment additive or do they accept a less widely used option that requires no additive, but whose detractors say might be less fuel efficient or reliable?

And if they choose MAN, do they simply put off their AdBlue day for three years as that manufacturer now intends to adopt EGR technology for Euro5? If they go for Scania's option, are they buying into a brilliant solution or the automotive equivalent of the Betamax video — a technical cul de sac inhabited by no one else?

Both sides argue with conviction, the EGR people saying their system is best, the SCR people saying theirs is cheaper and more reliable. And as most SCR people also build EGR engines for the North American market, it's not as if they're taking their chosen European route through lack of know-how.

Hopefully for all concerned, each system will be equally satisfactory, but if one turns out to be markedly better, many operators could be left with unpopular vehicles. Yet the only way fleets can hope to learn which works best is after Euro4 engines are proven in service.

So don't be surprised if some hedge their bets by ordering small trial batches of competing systems over the next couple of years.

THE ENTHUSIAST'S INSIGHT

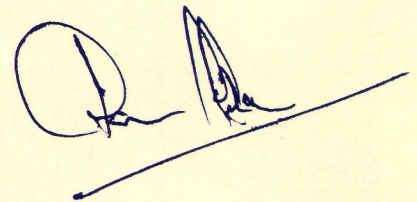
Once again, this month's You Write section contains some forthright criticisms of articles and letters we have published. In particular, some readers take our respected regular contributors John Lidstone and Julian Osborne to task for views they have expressed in their Fleet News and Service Extra columns, while some challenge some of those whose letters we have published.

It's the price all of us pay occasionally for daring to stick our heads above the parapet to express our opinions on an industry we care about dearly.

While it is true that most of us write and comment as observers rather than as bus managers or drivers, all of us write with a passion for buses and coaches and many of us write as occasional if not daily users of bus and coach services. When we comment on what seems like substandard customer service or a rough-riding vehicle, it's not a gratuitous criticism but a cry from the hearts of people who care and believe things could be better. Who try to view bus or coach travel through the eyes of the car driver.

In that sense, we are no different from football writers criticising the management and playing skills of competing teams.

It's the enthusiast's insight, a unique form of customer feedback, that we offer our many industry readers as a spur to help them improve. If you work in the business and write in to disagree with what our writers say, we'll take that as a compliment, for it shows that you also care deeply enough to tell us what you think.



ALAN MILLAR

Cover picture: One of two Volvo 9700 Prestige Plus demonstrators that went on the road in May, and Solent Blue Line all-Leyland Olympian 708 (F708 SDL) in the company's new livery. ALAN MILLAR/DAVID JUKES



PAGE 22 - Polishing up at Brighton



PAGE 8- Leather seats for Keighley. ANDREW JAROSZ



PAGE 41 - Where's the engine? JOHN G. LIDSTONE

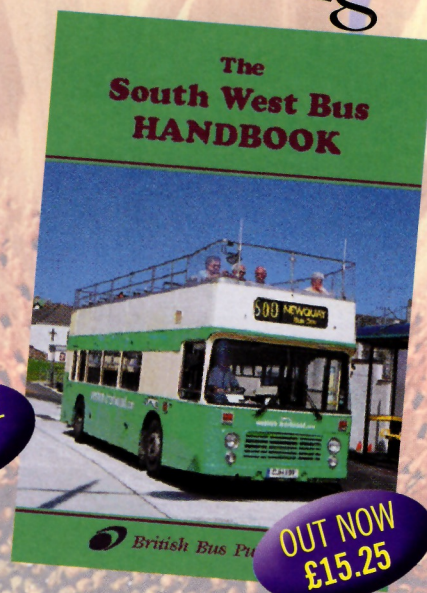
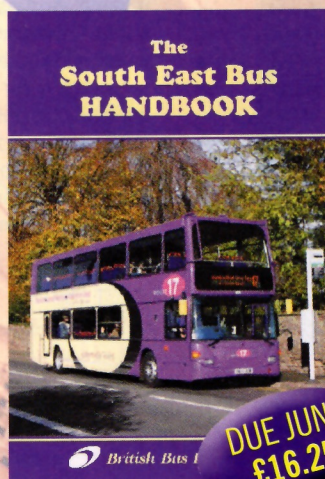


**PAGE 49 -
Winners at
Cultra.**

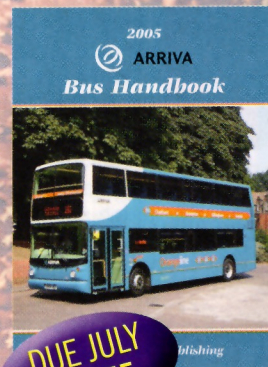
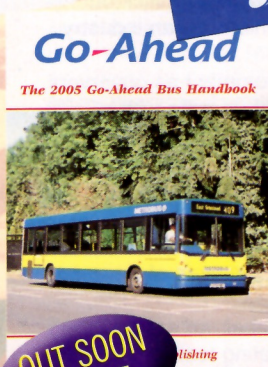
G. IRVINE MILLAR

SUMMER SIZZLERS

Red Hot Releases for the Summer from British Bus Publishing



- ◀ Stagecoach 2005
- ▲ South East Third Edition
- ▶ South West Third Edition



SUPERB HIGH QUALITY CARDS

Celebrate in style with these beautiful illustrated Greetings cards, Six A5 cards with envelopes, choose from two sets: A and B £7.50 per set



Regional Handbooks

In addition to the major group series, the remainder of Britain and Ireland are included in regional handbooks. These books contain operators of services and well known coach operators. Thickness and prices are dependent on the number of operators in the geographical area concerned, and are updated approximately every 2 to 3 years.



British Bus Publishing

Orders for all your Bus Handbooks and Capital Transport Books may be placed with our mail order department. To order, simply telephone us. Payment may be made by Visa, Mastercard, Cheque or Postal Order. We also specialise in Hong-Kong sourced die-cast models. For latest models please call the order line.

**ORDER
LINE**

01952 255669 (9am-9pm Monday-Thursday)

Facsimile: 01952 222397 British Bus Publishing 16 St Margaret's Drive, Telford TF1 3PH

SALE TALKS AT SOUTHERN VECTIS

Southern Vectis, the only former National Bus Company subsidiary listed on the Alternative Investment Market, was in discussions with a potential buyer as we closed for press in early May.

The group — which also runs a transport consultancy — operates 84 buses on the Isle of Wight under its own name and 64 in Southampton and neighbouring parts of Hampshire as Solent Blue Line. It made a pre-tax profit of £812,000 in 2003/04, on £16.98 million turnover, a margin of 4.8%.

It informed the City on 4 May that it was 'in discussions with a third party, which may or may not lead to an offer being made for the entire share capital of the company'.

Southern Vectis was the fifth NBC company to be privatised. Its

management paid £1.1 million in October 1986 for the Isle of Wight operation, which then had an asset value of £1.5 million. It provided part of the capital to set up Solent Blue Line, which began operating in Southampton in May 1987 and acquired the Hampshire Bus

operations in Southampton and Eastleigh from Stagecoach a few months later.

Having lost out in the bidding to buy Wilts & Dorset from NBC, Southern Vectis teamed up with Badgerline — another scorned suitor — to set up the 15-vehicle

Bournemouth-based Badger Vectis company, which competed against W&D between September 1987 and March 1988.

Later, Southern Vectis built up a portfolio of diverse businesses around the Solent, but subsequently demerged the non-bus activities.



Right: Southern Vectis open-top Bristol VR 503 (XDL 872) at Shanklin Esplanade in April last year. PAUL SAVAGE

GO-AHEAD GOES PUBLIC WITH YELLOW BUSES BID

Go-Ahead has raised its game in the bidding to buy Yellow Buses from Bournemouth Council by releasing details of its plans into the public domain.

By early May, the Liberal Democrat-controlled council was awaiting final bids to buy the 135-vehicle bus and coach operation, which made an £897,000 pre-tax profit in 2003/04, and hopes to name a buyer by August. While the council intends that the buyer will retain the Yellow Buses identity, Go-Ahead wants to merge it with Wilts & Dorset, which it argues has been serving Bournemouth for 89 years, and create a single network of direct, high-frequency routes with modern low-floor buses.

'Two separate networks and fares systems and the lack of a travel card for use on all buses have not made life easy for the customer,' says W&D managing director Alex Carter.

'Bournemouth's buses are currently losing 3% of passengers every year, leading to even more cars on the roads.'

'The Yellow Buses sale presents a one-off opportunity to create a

single, customer-friendly network. At the same time, we want to massively upgrade the travel experience so that people choose the bus as a genuinely viable option, rather than just reach for the car keys. We have ambitions for Bournemouth's buses and our plans will give the area the most highly specified fleet in the UK.'

Go-Ahead would repeat the strategy adopted by its Brighton & Hove subsidiary in May 1997, when it bought the ex-municipal Brighton Transport undertaking and merged the two networks. It says that ridership there has since risen by 56%.

W&D would extend its recently introduced More brand across the main corridors of Bournemouth, Poole and Christchurch, running

Right: Among the older Yellow Buses vehicles that Wilts & Dorset says it would replace is Alexander-bodied Volvo Citybus 205 (E205 CGG).

STEVE RICE

buses at least every 5 to 10min with additional early morning, evening and late night services. It would cut out many of the existing 'round the houses' diversions on the low-frequency Yellow Buses system. Besides network-wide travel cards, it would sell books of 10 Parisian-style carnet ticket books, offer low fares to students and group tickets for friends and families travelling together.

Go-Ahead says it would replace much of the existing Yellow Buses

fleet with low-floor, air conditioned buses with 2+1 seating similar to the Wright-bodied Volvo B7RLEs with which it launched its first More services towards the end of last year.

Again building on its experience in Brighton, it says it would work closely with local councillors and would set up a stakeholder board of residents, key employers and retailers 'to guarantee community involvement in the delivery and future planning of the network'.



VOLVO LAUNCHES A STAINLESS STEEL FLAGSHIP

Twenty years after it first tried to interest operators in such a vehicle, Volvo is to sell a complete coach with its own stainless steel bodywork in the UK from next year.

While four British operators took 10 of the only 79 examples of its stainless steel C10M built following its launch in July 1984, the omens look better for the new 9700 Prestige Plus. It is built at Volvo's 10-year-old plant at Wroclaw in Poland and is based on a family of coaches already built for left-hand-drive markets, whereas the technically advanced C10M was built under contract in Switzerland, where labour costs are high.

The 9700 combines bodywork designed by Carrus, the Finnish coachbuilder that Volvo bought in 1997, with running units for the rear-engined B12B. Initially, it will be available only as a 12.2m long, 3.55m high two-axle coach with 420hp 12litre horizontal engine and I-Shift 12-speed automated transmission. A three-axle, 13.7m long, 3.7m high version follows during 2006 and with next year's move to Euro4 engines, the power rating on both versions goes up to 460hp.

It will be the most expensive single-decker in Volvo's UK coach range, retailing at £225,000 — about £17,000 more than its current top-of-the-range offering, the Jonckheere-bodied B12B. Twenty years ago, list price of the C10M was £110,000.

While the Finnish-designed body is conservatively styled by comparison with, for example, the Spanish-built Irizar PB, Volvo is emphasising the build quality and high level of interior finish of the 9700. It also boasts in-built safety

features, including front impact protection — a feature mandatory on truck cabs, but not yet required on coaches.

The 'no extras' specification includes Volvo's own design TS2000 seats that recline and widen for added comfort, a gently ramped theatre-style floor to provide all passengers with good forward visibility, Xenon headlamps, a high-quality in-coach sound and vision entertainment system and satellite navigation that will allow passengers to follow the progress of their journey.

Two right-hand-drive demonstrators took to the road in May and a third will be exhibited at the Bus World show in Kortrijk, Belgium in October. Volvo is anticipating selling upwards of 20

next year, which it hopes will be in addition to existing volumes of B12B, B12M and B7R coaches.

The rear location of the engine on the 9700 reflects the rapid rate at which UK operators have switched from the mid-engined B12M to the B12B in the five years since Volvo launched them. It estimates that the B12B accounts for 65% of sales for these two models and that the proportion is closer to 75% if B12M fleet orders from Shearings and Park's of Hamilton are excluded.



THREE ENGINES FOR EURO4

Volvo will use a third engine when it revises its UK bus and coach range next March to comply with Euro4 emissions limits.

The 12litre Swedish-built DH12 engine (including a new 460hp version) will power the B12M and B12B, while the B7R coach and B7RLE bus will receive the 7litre MD7 built in Germany in a joint venture with Deutz. The big change is that the full low-floor B7L, articulated B7LA and double-deck B7TL will be replaced by a new B9L, B9LA and B9TL range with the French-built 9litre MD9 engine.

The MD9 restores a gap created in the Volvo engine range when plans for a direct Euro3 replacement for the 10litre unit in the B10M were lost after the original Volvo/Renault merger collapsed in the early 1990s. Volvo believes that double-deck operators in particular will welcome the use of a bigger capacity engine and that it will overcome resistance to the B7L in other markets like Austria and Switzerland.

The B7LA-based Wright StreetCar has been designed to accommodate the taller and longer

MD9 engine. However, the dimensions are too great to fit under the floor of the B7R and B7RLE, hence the retention of a 7litre engine in these two models.

In common with most of the large volume manufacturers in Europe, Volvo is adopting selective catalytic reduction (SCR) rather than exhaust gas recirculation (EGR) to comply with Euro4. This requires the injection of urea and water into the exhaust system, but Volvo is confident that its SCR engines will be more reliable and economical than rivals' EGR units.

EAST LANCs BUY-OUT

The three executive directors of East Lancs Coachbuilders have acquired a major shareholding in the company from former outright owner Dawson Williams. Executive chairman David Powell, managing director Mike Kilroy and sales director John Horn say that the deal will provide East Lancs, its customers, suppliers and employees with 'stability for the foreseeable future'.

MAN SEEKS NEW UK BODY PARTNERS

MAN has strengthened its partnership with East Lancs Coachbuilders and is pursuing similar relationships with Wrightbus and Plaxton in a drive to win a larger share of the UK bus and coach market.

Neoman, the MAN and Neoplan bus and coach division, has a global ambition to increase annual sales from around 5,000 to 6,000 vehicles and has set a target of selling 400 in the UK by 2008. Neoman UK managing director Vince Welsh, who took charge at the beginning of this year, says it needs to break into more major fleets, and offer a wider choice of bodywork.

Despite orders from Stagecoach for in excess of 500 Alexander ALX300-bodied 18.220s over the past six years, MAN has sold only penny numbers of this 12m single-decker to other UK operators. Its new strategic partnership with East Lancs, which already bodies the 14.220 midibus chassis, will see the Blackburn coachbuilder building on the 18.220 and the 12tonne 12.220 midibus.

East Lancs also is the first bodybuilder signed up for MAN's move into the double-deck market later this year with the A48, a 10.7m and 12m chassis with nearside rear engine and super single rear wheels. It is a shorter version of MAN's three-axle double-decker developed for Hong Kong.

Vince Welsh hopes to negotiate similar deals with Wrightbus and Plaxton. He believes a partnership with Wrightbus is essential if MAN is to sell the 18.220 to First or Arriva. It has tendered to supply Translink, which requires 120 full-size single-deckers for its Ulsterbus and Metro fleets in Northern Ireland, with

Wright-bodied 18.220s; at least one smaller mainland British fleet is also known to be attracted by this combination.

Similarly, he is convinced that a tie-up with Plaxton is essential to broaden the appeal of MAN's coach range — currently available with Marcopolo, Noge and Caetano bodies — and to break into the market for National Express coaches.

MAN also is expanding the volume of business through MCV, its other UK bus bodybuilding partner, which already bodies the 12.220 and 14.220 midibuses. Besides building these in greater volumes than the initial one a week, it intends to add the six-cylinder-engined 10.220 midi, which can be built as short as 8.5m.

A further body option on the 18.220 was unveiled at the UK Coach Rally in April. This is the Portuguese-built Marcopolo Viale, which BASE — the bodybuilder's UK dealer — is targeting at smaller operators. Like Stagecoach's ALX300s, this steel-framed body is fitted out with 42 seats and a ramped floor but has a comparatively short low-floor area. As exhibited, it has bonded glazing and stretched

Right: MAN believes that a tie-up with Wrightbus might help it win orders from First, whose recent purchases include Wright Solar-bodied 65730 (YN05 HCV), one of seven Scania L94UBs acquired ex-stock for its Potteries fleet. CLIFF BEETON

side panels, but production examples will likely have shorter, more easily replaced panels. It is one of at least five being imported.

With the renewed emphasis on the 18.220, MAN has dropped plans to sell the more expensive, full low-floor NL223 single-decker in the UK.

It brought two 12m rigid and one 18m articulated right-hand-drive chassis into the country and intended to have them bodied by East Lancs with MAN's own windscreen and front dash, but doesn't believe they are what UK operators want. The chassis will probably go to another country, maybe Israel.

Below: The first Marcopolo Viale-bodied MAN 18.220 for the UK at the UK Coach Rally.



ENVIRO300s IN LATEST STAGECOACH ORDER

Stagecoach has ordered five Alexander Dennis Enviro300 single-deckers as part of the promised second part of its 2005/06 capital programme.

Stagecoach Manchester has an early TransBus Enviro300 and Stagecoach Warwickshire operates four Warwickshire County Council-owned examples from its Rugby depot, but this next quintet is destined for Stagecoach North East, for the MetroCentre Shuttle.

Most of the other orders announced on 25 April call for standard types in Stagecoach fleets — 79 Trident ALX400 double-deckers (49 for London) and 30 Pointer Dart midibuses

from Alexander Dennis, 28 Alexander Dennis ALX300-bodied MAN 18.220s and 25 Optare Solo midibuses. These orders follow those announced in March for 340 Tridents, Darts, 18.220s and Solos (Buses last month).

■ A rogue sentence in last month's *Buses* suggested that Lothian Buses had ordered two Wright Eclipse Commuter-bodied Volvo B7RLEs in addition to its low-floor Wright-bodied Volvo double and single-deckers. It hasn't. The sentence belonged to the story about Stagecoach Western, which has ordered the first two Commuters for its Dumfries-Stranraer route.

Marcopolo to body EuroRider

Portuguese-built Marcopolo bodies will soon be available on the Irisbus EuroRider coach. Until now, most EuroRiders sold in the UK have had Spanish-built Beulas bodies, with a small number bodied by Plaxton at Scarborough. However, BASE — the Marcopolo dealership — is to sell the EuroRider alongside Marcopolo-bodied MANs.

IN BUSES NEXT MONTH On sale 17 June

- Plaxton a year on
- First Wyvern
- Newport Bus
- All the latest news and Fleet News



BLAZEFIELD TEMPTS CAR DRIVERS WITH 'STRETCHED LIMOS'

Keighley & District has introduced the Blaze field group's first leather-seated single-deckers — branded as 'the ultimate stretched limousines' — on its 662 Keighley-Bradford service.

It has invested £2.2 million in 14 Wright Eclipse Urban-bodied Volvo B7RLEs, which replace

Wright Renown-bodied Volvo B10BLEs buses on this, the best performing K&D service. These new 43-seaters have additional legroom, tinted windows and a host of security features.

Blaze field chairman Giles Fearnley says the 662 — which runs every 10min for most of the

day on Mondays to Saturdays — already carries over 2.1 million passengers a year. Besides the new buses, extra Sunday morning journeys have been added

along with a £12 seven-day ticket branded Shuttle 7.

Blaze field pioneered leather seating on the top decks of the Wright-bodied Volvo double-deckers introduced last year in its Harrogate & District fleet. Besides generating 15% more passengers on the Leeds-Harrogate-Ripon corridor, they were treated with more respect than other buses, with virtually no vandalism and much less litter.



The new branding for the 662 fits in with Blaze field's policy of creating a unique identity for each upgraded service without variations either on a theme, or linked to a fleet livery. It first introduced route branding over 10 years ago, but this was restricted to listing destinations and service numbers within a fleet livery.

Pictures by JAMES LAWRENCE and ANDREW JAROSZ



MASS SELLS LINCOLN OPERATIONS TO DUNN-LINE

Dunn-Line took over the MASS Engineering operations at Lincoln during May in a deal worth nearly £500,000.

It gives Dunn-Line 29 vehicles, 33 staff, the freehold of the George Street depot, and plant and machinery. Operations include commercial and contracted routes in Lincoln and in Newark where Optare Solos provide Nottinghamshire County Council Village Lynx services. It

plans to use the depot as a springboard for expansion in the area.

MASS has taken back its Leyland Titan double-deckers, which are replaced by Dunn-Line MCW Metrobuses, but three ex-Hong Kong tri-axle Brightbus yellow schoolbuses will remain on loan until the end of the school year, before returning to MASS for Sheffield school contracts. Dunn-Line

aims to scrap or dispose of the Leyland Nationals at Lincoln.

MASS expanded from South Yorkshire into Lincoln following the collapse of Appleby's Coaches in 2001, and subsequently took over the services of Reliance and Road Car in Grantham, and Leon of Farningley in the Doncaster area. Reliance operated into Nottingham. Following this deal and its withdrawal from

Grantham in February, MASS is left with its bases at South Anston and Farningley and operates no farther south than Worksop.

Managing director Mick Trafford concedes that Lincoln was too far away to exercise proper management control, and by focusing on school services, the company is planning to concentrate on what it does best.

D&G SECURES CHOICE TRAVEL

Choice Travel, the West Midlands local bus operator that was one of the last constituents

of the Status Group, has been sold to D&G Coach & Bus. The deal adds 31 mixed vehicles —

including Optare Solos and Excels — to Longton, Stoke-based D&G's fleet, which in seven years has grown to a strength of 66 with depots in

Adderley Green and Crewe. D&G takes its name from those of co-owners David Reeves and Gerald Henderson, who plan to run Choice as a stand-alone business with a new general manager in day-to-day charge. The decision to sell Choice was prompted by

founder Tom Young's desire to retire. Previously managing director of London Buses' ill-fated London Forest subsidiary, he set up Choice in March 1992. Status chairman Julian Peddle — a former MD at Stevenson's of Uttoxeter — became a Choice director following the takeover of Metropolitan Omnibus Company of Darlaston and Choice joined Status Group at its formation in June 1999.

With just MK Metro left, Status Group is effectively dead as an entity, but Julian Peddle retains substantial financial interests within the industry, including a shareholding in Alternative Investment Market-listed Tellings-Golden Miller.



Left: Choice Travel K856 PCN, a Wright Handybus-bodied Dennis Dart new to Go North East.

**Ray dresses
like the
backend
of a bus...**



Models shown from left to right: OM44704 Dennis Dart SLF/Plaxton; Arriva Kent & Sussex. OM43312 Plaxton Premiere; Wilts & Dorset Bus Co. OM43311 Plaxton Excalibur; Oxford Bus Co. OM41208 Wright Eclipse Gemini; London United.

...our bus!

Visit your local Corgi retailer to see the new bus liveries designed by the outrageously talented Mr Stenning. Dressing up optional!

For more information call our Customer Services team on 0845 603 9070 or check the website!



FIRST SPARKS IRISH COACH PRICE WAR

FirstGroup has stepped up competition for long-distance coach passengers in Ireland by cutting fares and drafting one of its British-based coaches into Dublin.

First fired the initial shot in the battle on 14 March, when Aircoach — its Irish subsidiary — introduced single fares of €7 (£7 from Northern Ireland) and €12 return to Dublin Airport on all of its routes.

That meant that longer distance passengers from Portlaoise, Cork and Belfast paid the same as those from points in Greater Dublin.

Right: First Manchester Irizar-bodied Scania coach 23017, complete with Aircoach fleetnames and Irish registration 04 D 72883, in service in Cork. STEPHEN LYNCH

With significant numbers of its passengers switching loyalty to Aircoach, Bus Éireann matched Aircoach's single fare on most routes and cut its Dublin-Cork

single to €6.30, making it one third of the €18.90 day return, which remains available. To strengthen the Aircoach fleet, First has transferred one of its Manchester-

based Scania/Irizar coaches to Ireland on extended loan, retaining its UK livery and fleetnumber, but with Aircoach fleetnames and a Dublin registration number.



HISTORIC LIVERIES FOR FIRST AND STAGECOACH

First and Stagecoach are marking three anniversaries by painting four more of their older vehicles in historic liveries.

First Bristol has helped mark the centenary of the start of motorbus operation in the city by overhauling and repainting a Roe-bodied Leyland Olympian in the Bristol Tramways & Carriage Company's blue and white livery and naming it after Sir George White, who founded the business. Although regular motorbus services started in January 1906, trials began the previous November.

The choice of bus is significant as the 21-year-old Olympian was

one of the last built at the Bristol Commercial Vehicles plant. Besides its five-digit First number, it also carries decorative fleetnumber 238, the one after Bristol's last tram.

Stagecoach is commemorating the start of the Hastings tramway system by painting two Volvo B10M single-deckers in historic liveries — one in red with Hastings Tramways Company fleetnames, the other in Maidstone & District dark green with traditional scrolls. It also is repainting a Volvo Citybus double-decker in iconic Southdown apple green and cream to mark that company's 90th anniversary.

Below: Stagecoach 20680 (R680 HCD), the Northern Counties Paladin-bodied Volvo B10M-55 painted in Hastings Tramways livery. PAUL PHIPPS



Below: First Bristol Leyland Olympian 34552 (A952 SAE) in its Bristol Tramways livery, with preserved Bristol K5G C3336 (GHT 154) in the background. MARTIN S. CURTIS



PETE'S TRAVEL BECOMES PEOPLE'S EXPRESS

West Midlands independent Pete's Travel has rebranded itself as People's Express.

The West Bromwich company — which reformed itself some time ago from the previous Lionspeed company to Probus Management — has retained its distinctive yellow livery and is

otherwise continuing to trade as before.

People's Express was the name of a company whose assets Pete's Travel acquired in the mid-1990s in settlement of debts for the supply of fuel.

Plaxton Pointer-bodied Dennis Dart SLF KU52 RYO with its new People's Express identity. TONY HUNTER



LONDON VETERANS SHINE ON BRIGHTON RUN

Two preserved London single-deckers attracted much of the attention on this year's Historic Commercial Vehicle Society London-Brighton run on 1 May.

The overall rally winner was LT1076, the London's Transport Museum AEC Renown 'Scooter' 35-seater, which has emerged from its 11-year restoration to original 1931 condition with authentic materials and colour scheme. It was withdrawn from London Transport service in 1950 and survived by being converted into a chalet.

While the return of the 'Scooter' was billed in advance, the appearance of 1921-built AEC S433 was a big surprise. Built with solid tyres and an open cab,

it was converted to pneumatic tyres in 1930 and had its cab enclosed two years later. It retained its General fleetnames until withdrawn by London Transport in 1936 — 69 years ago. It was rediscovered in 1985 forming the middle room of a house and has been restored over the past 12 years using specially manufactured parts and major chassis units salvaged from other sources.

A more recent vehicle making its London-Brighton debut was a 1955 Beadle Commer coach with a reconditioned two-stroke Commer TS3 engine that was fitted last year. Originally a Beadle demonstrator, it served later with Moss Tours on the Isle of Wight.

Below: 'Scooter' LT1076 at Broadfield Stadium, Crawley on 1 May. GEOFF RIXON



Above: Back on the road for the first time in 69 years, S433 heads for Brighton. It also won a trophy. MARK LYONS

Below: Beadle Commer WKJ 787 arriving in Madeira Drive, Brighton. DAVID JUKES



NORTH WEALD RALLY CANCELLED

One of the main outdoor bus events of the year — the annual North Weald rally scheduled for 26 June — has been cancelled.

Announcing the move as we closed for press, Roy Johnson and Jim Blake of the North London Transport Society said: 'This is to do with a change of management at the airfield and local government red tape, health and safety etc. We have tried to comply, but they keep wanting more and more and still

haven't formally agreed the booking. 'We therefore decided that it was better to cancel it now and give everyone warning rather than go to the wire and have it cancelled by the council on 25 June.'

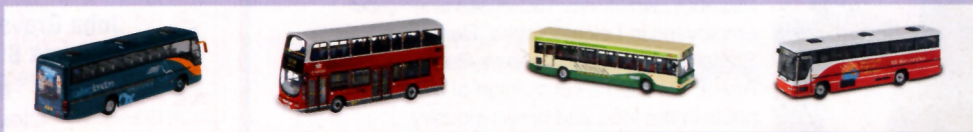
Readers visiting the London area that weekend might like to note that two depot open days — Metroliner at Holloway and Stagecoach at Waterden Road, Stratford — are being held the previous day, Saturday 25 June.

CORGI COMPETITION WINNERS

The four winners of our April competition to win four sets of autographed Corgi Original Omnibus Company bus and coach models were Ronald Bowen from Brighton, John Schofield from Stanmore, K. Taylor from Paisley and Malcolm Worboys from Cromer.

Each of you will receive the models, signed by bus livery designer Ray Stenning, direct from Corgi. The correct answers were that the main colour in Arriva's livery is aquamarine, Ray Stenning's standard fleet livery for Trent Barton is red and the company relaunched as The Shires was Luton & District.

■ DVD competition, see p26



TWO OLYMPICS MODELS

Model bus collectors will soon have the opportunity to buy two different 1/76th scale diecasts of modern London double-deckers in blue Back the Bid livery as part of the UK capital's effort to host the 2012 Olympic Games.

London's Transport Museum has commissioned a limited run of 2,000 Corgi Wright Eclipse Geminis — as operated by Arriva on route 29 — which go on sale in its Covent Garden museum shop from 1 June, price £24.99. Also in June, Creative Master Northcord will issue a Back the Bid-liveried

Alexander ALX400 in the guise of London United Dennis Trident TLA26.

■ Creative Master Northcord currently anticipates having its articulated Mercedes-Benz Citaro in the UK in August. The five winners of our recent competition for this model will receive their prizes as soon as they reach the UK, as will the winners of the earlier competition for CMN's Lothian Alexander Royale, which was expected soon after we closed for press.

Bus Opportunities *with Bus People*

ALAN WESTWELL RETIRES AFTER 49 YEARS

Picture by DARREN HALL



Dublin Bus managing director **Dr Alan Westwell OBE** has retired after 49 years in the British Isles bus industry — most of it in senior management roles in the public sector. Irish Rail MD **Joe Meagher** has moved within the state-owned CIÉ group to take charge of Dublin Bus.

Alan Westwell began his career as an apprentice engineer with Liverpool Corporation Passenger Transport and advanced within the municipal sector with senior engineering posts in Southport, Coventry and Glasgow. He moved into general management in 1974 as director of public transport with the newly formed Tayside Regional Council, which took over the Dundee municipal bus service in May 1975.

He returned to Greater Glasgow PTE in November 1979 as director general, overseeing the change of name to Strathclyde PTE a year later, and became chief executive at Strathclyde Buses in 1986 when the arms' length operating company was established to compete in the deregulated market.

Having successfully resisted vigorous competition from the Scottish Bus Group, he returned to his native north-west England in 1989 as chief executive of Greater Manchester Buses and on the split of that business in 1993 he took charge of GM Buses North, the larger of the two successor companies. He led an employee buy-out in March 1994, but left after First bought the company two years later and took on the Dublin role in 1997. Over the past eight years, Dublin Bus has expanded and substantially renewed its fleet, taking advantage of bus priority measures to generate an increase in peak period ridership of up to 40%.

He has also held high office in industry associations, notably as Confederation of Passenger Transport president in 1989 and as a vice-president of UITP, the international association, in the 1990s.

One of the industry's innovators, Alan Westwell helped pioneer urban minibus and wheelchair accessible bus services in the 1980s, when he also commissioned a unique rural transport vehicle with demountable bus and van bodies. Another hallmark of his career was a belief in sourcing new buses from two or more independent manufacturers, with a succession of trials conducted under his stewardship in Glasgow, Dundee, Manchester and Dublin.

WOMEN TAKE TOP ROLES WITH ARRIVA, STAGECOACH AND GO-AHEAD



After five years as Arriva's director of customer services, **Catherine Mason** has moved into an operational role as managing director at Arriva Midlands, which has 730 buses and 1,900 employees in Leicestershire, Derbyshire, Staffordshire and Shropshire. Before joining Arriva, she held a succession of marketing posts in the food and drinks industry.

Bryony Chamberlain, operations director at Stagecoach West Scotland since 2002, has become the group's youngest managing director by succeeding

James Freeman as MD at Stagecoach Warwickshire, which has 180 buses and 400 staff. She joined Stagecoach in 1996 as a graduate trainee and has worked with its East Midlands, Manchester, South East and North East businesses.

Louisa Weeks (right), who joined Go-Ahead 11 years ago as a graduate trainee, has become operations director at the group's Oxford Bus Company. She headed the company's human resources department for the past seven years.



GORDON JAMIESON, ALL- ROUND SHETLAND BUSMAN

Well-known Shetland operator and bus expert **Gordon Jamieson** died on 4 April, aged of 57, after a long illness, which he had fought courageously.

His grandfather founded R. G. Jamieson & Son, a taxi and car hire business, in 1922, expanding later into bus and coach operation. From his childhood, Gordon was involved in these activities and between them, he and his cousin Robert later owned and managed the family business based at Cullivoe on the island of Yell. He was actively involved in the company until his death.

Eye for detail?

Would you like to work with ticket machines, system software, fares and timetables?

CUSTOMER SUPPORT OPPORTUNITIES

We are Britain's independent ticket system supplier, with a diverse product range including Almex and Cambist information and fare collection equipment. No two days are the same and a flexible approach is required.

You'll need to have good communication and telephone skills. IT literate and highly numerate, you'll need to be physically fit and able to focus while under pressure. You must be able to understand our products and how they inter-relate, and develop an appreciation of the issues surrounding them.

You must possess:

- ◆ A strong commercial awareness
- ◆ An in-depth operational knowledge of the bus industry
- ◆ The ability to work as an organised team player

Product training will be given. A good salary and non-smoking working conditions will be offered to the successful candidates. Write enclosing CV and telling us about your skills and why you would be able to handle such a position to;

John Groves TICKET SYSTEMS

John Groves at JGTS, 12 Magnet Road,
East Lane Business Park, North Wembley,

Middlesex HA9 7RG

Closing date 31 May 2005



Over more than 25 years, he built up his knowledge and amassed a unique photographic collection of Shetland buses, and in 2000 he fulfilled a long held ambition with the publication of his book, *Shetland Buses in the 20th Century*.

Throughout his life, he was a good friend to 'Scottish Column' in this magazine, to the PSV Circle and enthusiasts generally. He was

Below: One of Gordon Jamieson's more recent coaches, Berkhof-bodied Dennis Javelin Y22 RGJ, at Cullivoe in May 2001.

JOHN YOUNG



also instrumental in bringing about the preservation of Shetland buses through the creation of the Viking Coach Trust.

He had recently designed a livery for a forthcoming new coach — a service that he also performed for other local operators and for Shetland Council. He was also actively researching Orkney bus operations with a view to eventual publication, and was gathering 21st century material to update his Shetland book.

Besides buses, his other passion was Scottish country dance music, and he helped found the Cullivoe Band in the 1960s. With over 500 mourners attending, his funeral was held in the village hall rather than the local church — a measure of his standing locally, in the field of traditional music and in the bus and coach industry.

■ see Pictureview, p36

STUART APPLEBY

Stuart Appleby, former managing director of Appleby's of Conisholme, died on 21 April aged 63 after being taken ill during the UK Coach Rally in Brighton the previous weekend. He joined the family business in the late-1950s, helped expand it to a peak of 175 vehicles across Lincolnshire and Humberside, but later experienced the pain of seeing it collapse in 2001. He bounced back by joining up with Coopers of Killamarsch to set up a 12-vehicle operation in Grimsby. He was Bus & Coach Council (later CPT) president in 1985 and played a key role in establishing the biennial Coach & Bus shows.

Bus Electrician

Required

Sullivan Buses based in South Hertfordshire are looking for a qualified bus electrician to work at our North Mymms depot.

We operate a mixed fleet of more than 50 vehicles from depots around London. Our buses are a mixture of former London vehicles including Routemaster, Leyland Titan, Olympian, Metrobus, Volvo SLF, Dennis Dart & Dennis trident.

We are looking for a highly motivated individual who can organise his/her own time and can meet the high standards we expect from our staff.

Operations are 24hrs seven days a week and this post will entail some shift working to suit needs of the business. Sullivan Buses are happy to agree flexible duty times if this suits the successful applicant.

Salary is subject to qualifications and negotiation.

Full details of this post, types of vehicles and an application form are available on our web site www.sullivanbuses.com or alternatively please phone Eric Barker on 01707 646803 for an application form.

Sullivan Buses Engineering Ltd,

Swanland Road, North Mymms, Hertfordshire AL9.

"VERY PRACTICAL"

"It was well presented, in a structured manner which made learning interesting"

Alan Woods, Stagecoach

Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC) in National Passenger Transport

- Flexible packages designed to give you a head start!
- Revision & exam days available
- Competitive prices

Courses starting throughout the year

For further details, contact Sarah Skinns

www.ciltuk.org.uk

Tel: +44 (0)1536 740161
email: cpc1@ciltuk.org.uk

Other courses available



The Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (UK)

QUIET START FOR ROME'S NEW AGE TROLLEYBUSES

With little advance notice, trolleybus services returned to the streets of Rome on 23 March, when the city's mayor inaugurated the first route to be converted to electric traction.

ATAC, the Rome public transport organisation, has invested around £30 million in electrifying the Largo Labia express route and equipping it with 30 Polish-built Solaris Trollino 18 articulated trolleybuses with Hungarian-manufactured Ganz electrical equipment. The service runs every 7min between 05.30 and midnight with an end-to-end journey time of around 50min.

Overhead wiring has been erected on the main section between Largo Labia and a point about 250m north of Porta Pia on the edge of the city centre, with this work having been undertaken at the same time as street lighting standards were renewed. The wiring arrangements are more complex at Viale Regina Margherita, where the route crosses tram routes 3 and 19. The

Right: One of the new Solaris Trollino 18 trolleybuses running on battery power at Termini station. MARK SMITH

buses run on battery power on the innermost section between Porta Pia and Termini railway station, which is soon to be renamed after the late Pope John Paul II.

The previous Rome trolleybus system lasted from 1937 to 1972 and the new one has been introduced as part of a drive to reduce vehicle emissions in the city; ATAC is also increasing the proportion of gas-fuelled buses in its fleet to 25% (Global News last month). There are plans to convert at least two more routes to trolleybus operation.

Unusually for an Italian bus system, it is possible to buy tickets on the trolleybuses themselves. Dispensing machines are fitted in the rear platform, although these need to be validated in the same way as those bought from kiosks and other off-bus locations.



Right: A reminder of the earlier Rome trolleybus system in this 1969 view of a Fiat 668F in the then standard Italian municipal two-tone green livery. Its central driving position was a feature of Italian-built trolleybuses. MICHAEL DRYHURST



Wellington renewal is back on track

Funding has finally been agreed to modernise the Stagecoach-operated trolleybus system in Wellington, the only one still running in New Zealand.

The recently created Land Transport New Zealand agency had thrown the future of the system in doubt by calling for a report into the viability of trolleybuses. But it agreed in March to provide part of the NZ\$18 million needed to replace

the 20 to 25-year-old Volvo B58s with modern low-floor vehicles and to upgrade the overhead wiring. The Greater Wellington Regional Council and Stagecoach will also provide part of the funding.

Designline, the New Zealand bodybuilder, has already built a prototype low-floor trolleybus incorporating mechanical units salvaged from one of the Volvos and is building another two. The

modernisation project envisages the construction of a further 60.

Regional council chair Ian Buchanan says: 'Upgrading the trolleybuses is an important part of securing the long term future of Wellington's transport network, and will ensure this iconic part of Wellington's transport system is kept operating.' He says Greater Wellington supported the extra cost of the upgrade programme because it believes there are significant environmental and health benefits to using trolleybuses.

'We know from our commuter surveys that Wellingtonians prefer trolleybuses over diesels. The upgraded trolleybuses will be the equal of the modern diesels in accessibility and comfort, as well as being quieter, less polluting and more reliable. To achieve this, we expect the additional cost of upgrading and operating the trolleybus fleet, over and above what it would cost to provide an equivalent service using diesel buses, will be more than NZ\$1 million annually.'

KMB ORDERS ANOTHER 25 ENVIRO500s

The biggest Hong Kong operator — 4,300-vehicle Kowloon Motor Bus — has ordered a further 25 Alexander Dennis Enviro500 double-deckers.

KMB was the first customer for the three-axle Cummins ISM-powered Enviro500 when TransBus International launched it in 2002 and these latest vehicles will join 235 already in the fleet. Thirteen of the order will be supplied complete from the manufacturer's Falkirk body plant, while KMB will assemble the others in its own workshops in Hong Kong.

Until now, Alexander Dennis and TransBus before it have described the Enviro500 as a complete vehicle, but the announcement of the latest order refers to it being built 'on Trident 3' chassis. This may also be the first time that the manufacturer has acknowledged this hitherto unofficial designation of the three-axle model. The Enviro500 is also offered on Volvo B9TL chassis.

Below: Stagecoach Wellington 253, a 1985 Hawke-bodied Volvo B58 trolleybus. DONALD BOOTH



HANOVER HAILS FRONT-DOOR BOARDING

RegioBus, the regional operator serving the German city of Hanover, claims the decision last year to switch to front-only boarding has boosted cash takings and drastically reduced fare evasion.

From August last year, the company — 86.4% in local authority ownership — adopted the same policy for its dual-door fleet as such cities as Berlin, Duisburg, Dortmund and Bochum. 'Fare dodging has more or less been eliminated,' says RegioBus director Dieter Gabriel. 'At the same time, cash takings have gone up by more than 14%.'

Passengers have adapted quickly to the new system, which

has led to no significant rise in loading times or timetable delays. The company increased ridership by 2.8% per cent to 27.8 million passengers last year.

Braunschweig operator KVG says its trials with front door boarding in the Lower Saxony steel city of Salzgitter south-east of Hanover have also been positive. From last October, all passengers boarding have been obliged to present tickets to the driver. Since then, there has been a marked drop in vandalism and litter throwing. 'Passengers eating an ice cream, a hamburger or French fries are simply not allowed to get on,' says KVG director Ulrich Bethke.



Above: A RegioBus Setra 315NF in Hanover's central bus station. JOHN CAMERON

MALTA AXES TOURIST SERVICES

Malta's attempt to establish hop-on/hop-off tourist bus services has been given up.

The island authorities spent over Lm30,000 funding and marketing Visit Malta-branded routes 505 and 506, but the venture has not succeeded and they were withdrawn from 16 April. Buses correspondent Tom Johnson, who visited the island two weeks earlier, was unable to find much publicity about them.

'They were poorly advertised and seemed to attract little or no patronage from the holidaymakers, as throughout our stay, we noted only two vehicles in service on the routes, both travelling empty. Qawra bus station was strikingly devoid of any literature about these routes, and the route buses generally carried no advertising literature about these routes,

though a few vehicles bore adverts about them.'

With new low-floor buses — especially Chinese-built King Longs — continuing to arrive, he says many of the withdrawn traditional vehicles are now going for scrap. 'On 8 April, we saw two unidentifiable route buses near Tarxien heading for the breakers' yard. One was loaded on a lorry, the other was being towed almost piggyback with its front wheels off the ground.

'We learnt later on during our visit that it was highly likely that we had in fact seen the first two vehicles being taken for scrap, as the contract for disposal had begun that day. We were told that on average two withdrawn buses per working day will be disposed of and that all the disposals would be completed by the end of May.'



Above: Although many older Maltese buses are being scrapped, this Aquilina-bodied Reo on the neighbouring island of Gozo was put back in service last November after four years of idleness. TOM JOHNSON

EU SHUTS THE DOOR ON BERLIN 'HALFCABS'

Plans by BVG, Berlin's transport undertaking, to boost the security of its drivers by reverting to a 'halfcab' arrangement have been foiled by a new European Union directive.

After 269 assaults were recorded last year, a poll among drivers showed that 70% of them favoured fully-enclosed cabs as found in some of the old Ikarus 200-series buses operated by the East German undertaking in Communist days.

BVG began tests with two vehicles, but the undertaking discovered that new EU legislation from February 2005

stipulates that such cabins can only be installed in vehicles fitted with an outside cab door. None of the 1,400 vehicles in the fleet is thus equipped and retrofitting is out of the question for cash-strapped BVG.

As a compromise up to 10 of the 130 articulated Solaris Urbino 18s due this spring will be fitted with foldable Plexiglass anti-assault screens that can be pulled down in an attack. BVG spokeswoman Petra Reetz warns drivers not to expect too much from the measure: 'The most violent attacks take place once a driver has left his seat,' she says.

Connex to run Canadian BRT system

French transport giant Connex has been awarded the contract to operate the first phase of Viva, a bus-based rapid transit system in the Canadian city of York, Ontario.

Viva, with high quality shelters and a fleet of 85 low-emission 12m buses running every 5 to 10min on four corridors, starts in September and will link into the Toronto subway system. The system, described as a 'bus on rails' and 'a hybrid of a bus and a train', will have extensive bus lanes and traffic light priorities.

Glimmer of hope for Auwärter

Ernst Auwärter, the German coach manufacturer placed in administration earlier this year (Global News last month), hopes to continue making its range of

minibuses and midicoaches. 'The order situation is not too bad and we are holding talks with potential investors,' says administrator Dr Wolfgang Bilgery. Within weeks of the collapse, Auwärter axed half the workforce and is now down to 80 employees and 20 apprentices.

German Railways places joint order with MAN

Twenty-three local bus companies operated by Die Bahn (DB), Germany's national railway, have joined forces for the first time to place a bulk order for new vehicles.

The joint purchase of 192 MANs has resulted in seven-figure savings and signals a major drive to boost service quality, say railway officials. Most of the £25 million order is for 169 Lion's City dual-purpose coaches; it also includes 23 articulated buses.

Inside Track

It is time to prove what buses could do

with Brian Cox



I recently flew from Newcastle to London on a British Airways Airbus A320 to speak at a conference, and — not for the first time — wondered why 'Airbus' generates connotations of convenient, classless, easy travel, while 'bus' represents to many people an outmoded, inconvenient and not-even-to-be-considered mode of transport.

I'd agreed to speak at the conference — 'Buses as Rapid Transit' — because it focused wholly on buses and what they can achieve, with speakers from around the world describing successful modern systems in places as far apart as Adelaide, Bogotá and Rouen. As first speaker on, I started with a short video of Brazil's Curitiba system, which I was lucky enough to visit several times in the mid-1990s. Curitiba, more than anywhere else, made me passionate about what buses *can* do — but generally get so little opportunity to do in Britain.

Many *Buses* readers will be familiar with at least the main features of the Curitiba system. However, a chance comment at the conference — that Curitiba 'was only successful because it was a rapidly growing city' — made me realise that we in Britain have still not fully learned the ingredients of a successful modern bus system. Or worryingly — and perhaps more likely — that we have learned them but simply don't want to apply them. A lot of this is for fear of upsetting car users, and down to a continuing view of buses as a 'lower class' mode, but we also have a bad case of 'not invented here' in this country, I'm afraid. So the conference was especially welcome, and was fully subscribed with well over 100 delegates.

Curitiba was, and remains, a rapidly-growing city — with a population now of around 3 million — but there are plenty of fast-growing cities whose transport is a mess, and few if any that have made transport central to their whole

development, as Curitiba has done. Its success is down to the vision of its Mayor, Jaime Lerner, who served several terms in the 1970s and 1980s, and the strong support team he built up. He was determined that Curitiba should be a 'civilised' city with orderly development, and not be ruined by runaway private car growth.

The master plan

The Curitiba master plan called for development to be concentrated along key axes either side of high-quality busways. All buildings alongside busways were to be multi-storey, and such buildings were *only* allowed adjacent to busways. Road traffic was kept away from the central busway axis by construction of one-way roads on the *outside* of the twin line of multi-storey buildings. Compare this with Milton Keynes, developing at much the same time and designed with little thought for public transport.

I'll return to Curitiba in a future article, but the point I want to stress is that unless public transport is central to all land-use planning decisions, it will be unable to play a major role in restraining the continuing growth in car use. The Department for Transport acknowledges this in its latest forecasts, which suggest that bus passenger numbers will start to decline again from the end of the decade. Will we take the necessary action to change this?

I doubt it. First's new StreetCar catches the eye, and First will be anxious to use it in showcase situations like York where it can demonstrate its prowess, but I believe it will have an uphill task to get sufficient local authority buy-in for the bus priorities needed to justify its cost.

Apparently, even in horse-bus days, 'the fact that they [*trams*] required track embedded in city streets meant that private tram companies

needed to co-operate much more fully with local authorities than was the case with horse-drawn bus enterprises'. This is why trams continue to be promoted in places where bus options would make more sense, based on unattainable passenger forecasts to try to pass funding tests. What local authorities would do for trams, they won't do for buses. We badly need the Cambridge-St Ives busway to show what can be achieved. Let us pray that Cambridgeshire County Council and bus operators will be absolutely rigorous about quality standards on it.

Trolleybuses could be the answer

In some cases trolleybuses could be the halfway house between the flexibility wanted by operators, the certainty through infrastructure sought by local authorities and the affordability demanded by government. The artist's impression of the modern trolleybus system for the Uxbridge Road in London certainly gets my vote.

Turning again to that Airbus A320, it's obvious that it's all in the mind, isn't it? First's 'ftr' initiative is much to be commended, but I think First will have to persuade someone to put down some serious infrastructure if it is to realise its potential. This is the challenge it has laid down; we should all wish it luck.

Finally, if you want to learn more about what has been achieved 'over there' — i.e. Europe — I hear that my fellow 607 fan, the venerable AB, said by some to be the world's premier expert on these matters, is planning to lead some journeys of exploration shortly. That's the old Empire spirit. Well done! Hurry, there might be still be a few places left . . .

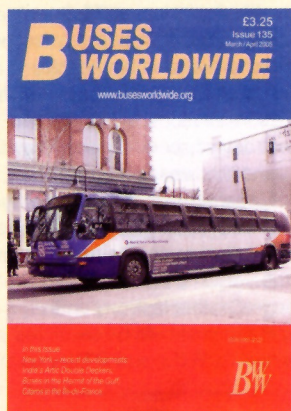
* *Transport in Britain*, Philip Bagwell & Peter Lyth, Hambledon & London 2002, p113

Below: The Curitiba plan restricted high-rise building development to the plots alongside the landscaped busways. BILL LUKE



BUSES WORLDWIDE

Join now and get 10%
off your first renewal!



- **Bi-monthly magazine**
- with 8 full **colour** pages
- **Articles and news from**
around the world
- **Regular overseas visits**
(2005 - Rome)
- **Social meetings held**
regularly in London &
Manchester
- **For the professional and**
enthusiast alike

**From Afghanistan to Zimbabwe, Andorra to
Russia, Spitzbergen to St Helena,**
BUSES WORLDWIDE for the global picture

<http://www.busesworldwide.org>

Membership forms available online or from
BWW (Dept BM), 37 Oyster Lane, Byfleet, KT14 7HS

CLASSIC BUS BUS BUS BUS BUS

REMEMBERING BUSES THE WAY THEY USED TO BE

C L A S S I C BUS

The bi-monthly magazine that recaptures the
glories of older buses and trolleybuses with
authoritative, entertaining and even provocative
articles from the best writers, and first class
photos in black-and-white and colour.

Classic Bus is available from good
news-stands and newsagents.

Subscriptions and other information:
CLASSIC BUS PUBLISHING LTD.
39 Lilyhill Terrace, Edinburgh EH8 7DR

CLASSIC CLASSIC CLASSIC CLASSIC CLASSIC
BUS BUS BUS BUS BUS



Your choice is our Speciality

Footman James policies include as standard :
Motor Legal Expenses, Personal Accident Road Rage cover.
Limited mileage and multi-vehicle policies also available.
For Over 20 years - *The Enthusiast's Choice*
Specialist Vehicle Insurance

FOOTMAN JAMES

Tel. 0845 330 8405

Web: www.footmanjames.co.uk
E-Mail: enquiries@footmanjames.co.uk

Authorised and regulated by
Financial Services Authority.
Telephone calls may be monitored
or recorded for your protection. An authorised company.



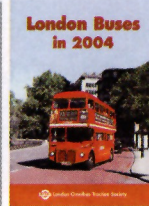
For more details of
the benefits of
membership of
Britain's largest
Bus enthusiast
society, or our latest
sales list, why not
check out the web
site, or alternatively
send a large stamp
addressed
envelope to:

Postal Sales or
Membership
Secretary,
(as applicable)
London Omnibus
Traction Society,
Unit N305,
Westminster
Business Square,
1-45 Durham Street,
London,
SE11 5JH

www.lots.org.uk

More new publications for the Spring

- **London Buses in 2004** - This book is a review of the routes, vehicles, operators, significant events as well as the politics of the year that make up the story that was 2004. Topics included are Routemaster 50, Armchair, fuel cell buses, Thorpes, the special operations to commemorate last days of crew operation, goodbye to the Metrobus, all over adverts and Bendybuses; 64 pages fully illustrated in colour £7.00 (£6.00 to members).



- **Service Vehicle Fleet History** - This new publication is the first full update for over 25 years and covers the years from 1914 to 2005 with some 6200 vehicles listed by number, registration, type and all known allocations. A4 size 112 pages, with over 100 illustrations including 15 in colour - £9.00 (£7.50 to members).



- **London Bus and Tram Fleetbook 2005** - up-to-date to March 2005, includes almost 10,000 vehicles with all the leading operators in London and the home counties in one handy A6 pocket sized publication. Order now, before stocks run out again - £7.00 (£6.50 to members).



- And don't forget that the **Autumn Transport Spectacular** will be at Harrow on the 29th October.

HAVE WE SEEN THE LAST BIG RM FAREWELL?

If you enjoyed the extra buses provided in the last days of Routemaster operation on various routes — the 19 (Finsbury Park-Battersea Bridge) was the most recent — then you should cherish the memories. Celebrations marking the end of Routemasters on the 13, 14, 22 and 38 may be very tame affairs.

Transport for London has handed over entire responsibility and liability for such events to the contracted operators (London Sovereign, London General and Arriva), under whose licence 'guest' vehicles will be deemed to be operating. They will need to check out the vehicles and their drivers, and take responsibility for any accident or other claims concerning guest buses.

However, TfL says these new arrangements will not apply to the 159 (Marble Arch-Streatham) — the final Routemaster route.

I have thought that TfL was public spirited (or perhaps enthusiast spirited) to permit all the extra operations we have seen, which have given enthusiasts and the general public the opportunity to ride on RTs, RTLs, RTWs, RM1 and others.

Several charities and other good causes have benefited from fares and donations on the buses, and we should also thank drivers, conductors, engineers and owners of the various preserved vehicles and those at TfL for enabling it all to happen. There has been acrimonious, ill-

informed and unjustified criticism of TfL in particular on various unofficial websites, which is a great shame. Nowhere else in the country would it have been possible to take part in such splendid and varied recreations — like the 11 specials on the last day of conductors on the 19.

While I understand the reasoning, and can think of all sorts of legal and other reasons why TfL could opt out of direct involvement in last day specials, it seems illogical to do this and then leap back in for the very last day. And here's a controversial thought for that last day on the 159s: perhaps operations should be restricted to Routemasters, with RTs, RTLs and RTWs on the previous day.

Rail replacement special: The need to provide wheelchair accessible buses on rail replacement contracts appears to have prompted Arriva to transfer Alexander ALX400-bodied DAF DB250 VLA125 (T325 FGN) into its Leaside Travel fleet at Edmonton.

BEN MORROLL



Blue artic: Stagecoach East London Mercedes-Benz Citaro G 23033 (LX03 HEJ) wears this special livery to promote the University of East London. It seems that the advertiser didn't extend the effect to covering the red roof tanks in blue vinyl. **SWANSWELL**

ANOTHER MAJOR LOSS FOR FIRST

Not long ago, I commiserated with London United over its loss of the 33 (Hammersmith-Fulwell) and 419 (Richmond-Hanworth) with a total of 24 buses on tendering to newcomer National Car Parks, while Transport for London's East Thames Buses lost the 128 (Claybury-Romford) and 150 (Becontree Heath-Chigwell Row) with a total of 23 buses to, respectively, Arriva London and First Capital.

Now it has transpired that London United will make up much of its loss by winning the new contract for route 27 (Turnham Green-Chalk Farm) from First CentreWest. The peak vehicle requirement will be for 20 new low-floor double-deckers, against the present 18. That's a key route for CentreWest to lose, and suggests that TfL's recent dissatisfaction is being backed by action. An ominous statement subsequently by First London's managing director Tony Wilson said there would have to be a serious review of its costs and competitive situation. But was the 27 lost on cost or performance?

There hasn't yet been any public announcement, but East Thames is also expected to make good some of its losses by winning the new contract for route 1 (Tottenham Court Road-Canada Water), currently operated by First Capital with a requirement for 16 double-deckers.

Better news for CentreWest is that it has won new route 485, replacing the half-hourly 805 (Northolt-Southall-Heathrow Cargo Area) with, as yet, no vehicle requirement given. Bharat Travel runs the 805 with about six low-floor Dennis Darts and some sponsorship from BAA, the airport company. It operates under a London Local Service Contract, which means it is theoretically a part of the London bus network. When it started in 2001 it was purely commercial, with no LT tickets of any sort valid. Now, it seems that only pre-pay Oyster cards are not accepted.

SLOW DEATH OF A GREEN LINE ORBITAL

Back in the mid-1990s, London Coaches operated former Green Line route 726 (then Heathrow Airport-Gravesend) with eight DAF single-deckers. Every subsequent retendering has seen cuts: first the Dartford-Gravesend section went, then the Dartford-Bromley section and now, despite public consultation and subsequent protests, it became an absolute shadow of its former self on 16 April, the limited stop X26 (East Croydon-Heathrow).

People may talk about joined-up transport networks and discouraging us from driving to airports, but this makes it seem all hot air. So, it seems to me, is 'public consultation' that appears to mean publicising what you intend to do, and then more or less doing it anyway.

MPs were among the many who protested in vain against the loss of the Croydon-Bromley section. It also omits Hampton Court, which surely is (or was) a valuable traffic objective. Transport for London's director of performance, Clare Kavanagh, blandly tells us in a press release that seven bus routes cover sections of the 726 and have been improved recently so people living on these don't need to use the 726 anyway. Three of them cover the part of the route no longer served.

One concession to the complainants was to retain stops in Carshalton, Cheam, North Cheam and Worcester Park, but what possessed TfL to even think about cutting them? The suggested alternatives for Croydon need three bus changes to reach Heathrow, and anyone from the wrong side of Croydon onwards would need more. Rail alternatives in the south-east all involve at least two changes plus a bus at the end: how suitable is that?

The X26 needs just four buses (Metrobus Scania OmniCitys) instead of the previous six (Tellings-Golden Miller Volvo B10BLEs). Next time it comes up for retendering, will there be a plan to cut it back to Sutton and save another bus ...?

Right: For possibly the first and only time, the X26 saw double-deck operation on Sunday 17 April. East Lancs-bodied Scania OmniDekka 446 (YV03 RAX) was passing through Hampton Wick, deputising for a single-decker apparently hemmed-in at the depot when the first duties were due to run out. **GEOFF RIXON**

Below: Metrobus Scania OmniCity 541 (YN05 HFE) in Worcester Park, one of the intermediate points through which TfL initially intended running the X26 non-stop. **SWANSWELL**



ARTICS RUN AT LAST ON THE 207

At last, First CentreWest's articulated Citaros are running on the 207 (now Shepherd's Bush-Hayes By-Pass), albeit from a former haulage depot in Rigby Road, Hayes, rather than from Transport for London's hoped-for North Acton depot, which is the subject of a planning appeal.

The 25 buses were delivered to the UK last October for a contract originally announced in 2003, which shows what a huge problem finding garage space has become. Their entry into service in mid-April also allowed CentreWest to take out 26 buses from the overcrowded Uxbridge garage, with all on new route 427 (effectively the western end of the old 207) based at Acton tram depot (as it is still quaintly called) as are a couple of school routes. As artics won't fit into Acton or Uxbridge garages, they'll be maintained at CentreWest's recently opened depot at Willesden Junction.

The 427 and the established limited stop 607 (Uxbridge-Shepherd's Bush) use existing low-floor Dennis Tridents, and have ousted the distinctively painted Volvo Olympians with their more comfortable seats previously used on the 607.

Some mid-week rides on the artics suggest that they have settled down fairly well, though congestion in Acton and Southall causes bunching. The driver on my first ride seemed determined to catch up on the one in front, which had been 6min ahead. We achieved her apparent aim, albeit by stopping a metre or more from the kerb at a couple of stops, blocking one box junction and trapping two boarding passengers in the front door opposite the driver.

The other drivers I encountered were much steadier and patient with last-minute arrivals at

stops. But on at least two of the buses, none of the four OysterCard readers worked, each one inviting potential users 'to use a nearby machine'. I saw one passenger try all four unsuccessfully. I was pleased to see a couple of revenue inspectors at work, but what did they do about those with non-validated OysterCards.

On my final ride, a wheelchair-bound passenger was waiting at one stop. Despite the driver's efforts, though the ramp on bus EA11009 could extend, the centre doors would not then open. She then got out and apologised to the potential passenger, got back in and made one last unsuccessful attempt. At this stage, two fit passengers spoke to her, she opened the doors again and the two lifted wheelchair and its user on. Trouble was, they had disappeared when the bus reached Shepherd's Bush. So wheelchair and user remained on the bus, which then drove round to the layover point, where two route controllers lifted off chair and user.

Whatever happened to...? ...TransBus International

Yes, a year has passed already since our pages were filled with news of the scramble to rescue TransBus International, which had gone into administration following the implosion of majority shareholder Mayflower.

In a foretaste of what has been happening much more recently with the collapse of MG Rover, the last British-owned volume car manufacturer, there was much wailing and gnashing of patriotic teeth as it looked like another piece of British engineering tradition could vanish or fall into foreign hands. There also is a parallel as there were allegations that some of the

company's directors would emerge with more intact pension funds than many of their hired hands.

Our June issue reported that two investment companies were leading the bids to buy TransBus in its entirety. Cerberus Capital Management was American, Dexter Capital Group was British. Neither was likely to see bus and coach manufacturing as a long-term game. A little later, a Chinese company called Greencool seemed to have taken the administrators' fancy; the expectation here — and forgive me if you think you've also heard this in the context of MG Rover — was that the Chinese would take the



technology home with them. Then the dream solution emerged just after we went to press.

Brian Davidson and his management team bought Plaxton and revived the old respected name. A Scottish consortium of the Great and the Good bought the bus side and renamed it Alexander Dennis.

If the latter was the dream solution — and it's hard to think of anything that would have been better — it maybe wasn't seen quite so rosily at the two smaller body plants. Alexander Dennis declined to buy

the Belfast site, which closed after fulfilling its final orders. It bought and hoped to keep the old Northern Counties plant open in Wigan, but by the autumn could see no way of making the numbers balance. It closed in January, almost certainly taking the Plaxton President with it.

Plaxton has been quietly getting on with its new life as a coach market specialist. Alexander Dennis has made much of each order it has won and is fast tracking the development of its apparently revolutionary Enviro400 double-decker.

WISH YOU WERE HERE? I'LL BET YOU DO

The indefatigable Fred York has come up with some real gems for my occasional series of picture postcards of buses in mundane Britain.

The view of High Street, Dundee — it's captioned 'The motorist's nightmare' — shows jaywalking on a truly serious scale as buses and trams join a few cars and a shooting brake in trying to find paths through the thronging masses. It doesn't explain whether there was a special event going on or if this is how the jam and jute workers used the city centre on a normal basis.

The corporation bus, by the way, is a 1947 Northern Coachbuilders-bodied Daimler CVD6. The card, from one of Fred's Birmingham enthusiast friends, is postmarked September 1957, but the picture is of an earlier scene as the trams (there's a Bedford OB coach behind them) were withdrawn in October 1956. His friend expresses delight at finding about eight ex-Birmingham EOGs running with McLennan's of Spitalfield.

The other — one that Fred wrote home from 'smashing digs' he had just found — could hardly offer a greater contrast. It's of the Central Hall, Tonypandy, a South Wales community photographed surely when the pits were working overtime and

only about four people were out on the streets. Given such an absence of populace, what moved the valley fathers to invest in traffic lights when downtown Dundee didn't even run to a traffic policeman?

The bus appears to be a Rhondda Transport AEC Regent of prewar vintage, en route for Porth.



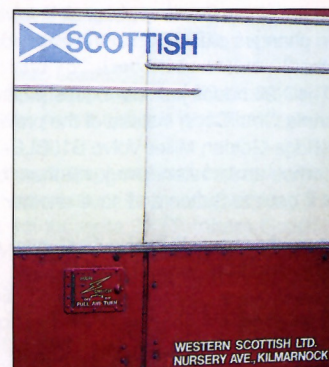
20 YEARS AGO

As it prepared for deregulation, the state-owned Scottish Bus Group went through some rapid changes during 1985. Its seven operating companies were replaced by 11 plus an engineering and a Citylink express coach subsidiary from June that year, but there were other significant changes before then.

In his June Scottish Column, Sandy Macdonald reported that the seven existing companies were renamed on 1 March to a common style as Something Scottish Omnibuses Ltd. W. Alexander & Sons (Fife) Ltd became Fife Scottish Omnibuses Ltd, Central SMT Co. Ltd became Central Scottish Omnibuses, and so on.

Except that wasn't the original plan. All seven had carried standard fleetname styles from the late-1970s as Fife Scottish, Central Scottish etc. The intention was to stick 'Ltd' after each of these names and not use the word 'Omnibuses' and in one case this was done with the 1 March renaming.

'Western SMT was originally the Scottish General Transport Co. Ltd, a BET subsidiary and consequently



registered in England,' Sandy reported. 'On 11 February 1985 it was renamed Western Scottish Ltd in line with the proposals for all the SBG operating companies, but the Registrar of Companies in Scotland required that the new titles should indicate the nature of the businesses.' Hence the use of the word 'Omnibuses' — which surely no one in Britain ever used in ordinary conversation ('Just hailing one's omnibus, papa') — for the subsidiaries registered in Scotland.

While at least some buses carried Western Scottish Ltd legal lettering for a few months, the company name lasted only for 18 days and it became Western Scottish Omnibuses Ltd on 1 March.

WRITE DIRECT TO MILLAR'S TALES

Please send any stories, photos (prints or slides), cuttings and other information on off-beat bus matters direct to: **Buses PO Box 3759, Glasgow, G41 5YN**

WHEN COMPUTER SAYS 'NO'

This is the antidote to my complimentary comments about National Express on pages 28-30 this month. It so happens that 30 April is my birthday and Mrs M and I flew to London to experience it as tourists rather than for work.

As we stepped off our plane at Heathrow, we noticed several NatEx posters offering bargain fares to Victoria for £4. This special offer, ending that day, appealed as we weren't in a hurry and Mrs M prefers not to use the Tube if she can. After all, they didn't have one in West Brom when she was a girl.

Simple? If only. The woman at the NatEx desk advised us to buy

a Travelcard, that the return journeys from Victoria on a Saturday afternoon/early evening were few and far between and times could only be divined by consulting eight separate leaflets for services to farther reaches of Britain.

And the £4 fare? After much faffing on her computer, she announced — in best *Little Britain* fashion — that she couldn't override the computer and, instead of £8 return, the fare would be £20 each. We bought Travelcards for £6 each ... and those £4 posters were still there when we returned to Terminal 1 in the evening.

WILL WOMEN SHOW PASSES TO MEN IN DARK GLASSES?

They look more than slightly menacing as they stride out in their suits and dark glasses, yet Norfolk County Council tells me it hopes these *Reservoir Dogs* lookalikes will actually encourage motorists to sample the relaunched park-&-ride service in Norwich.

Bob Couzins, Paul Jones, Ian Hosea, Dick Forder, Bernard Mabbett and Andy Norton — shown with Tina Rust from the council's passenger transport unit — are real bus drivers, whose images are being displayed on bus



backs and at the car parks to promote the repackaged service. The clever bit, evidently, is that each driver has a different coloured tie, matching the new route colours being applied to the six services.

ALIVE AND WELL, ALBEIT WITH AN ALIAS

The item in April 'Tales' about the Southend-liveried Leopard on a French pop record inspired Malcolm Cowtan to remind me that a sister bus is alive and well in preservation.

The bus on the record sleeve was former North Western Road Car 915 (VDB 915) and this picture — with Malcolm standing in front of it — shows similar 916, which lost its original matching VDB plate some time ago and

exists with the alias of USL 580, at an event in Birkenhead.

He points out that they were the last two of a batch of 10 with Alexander bodies — the first 36ft Leopards built after the rules changed in 1961 — and the only ones with forced air ventilation. He tells me that the body style — an adaptation of the Z-type built for BET fleets — was known as the Highlander, though I suspect that was an unofficial name.



RAILBUS OF THE MONTH

My congratulations — and a Corgi 1/76th-scale diecast model — go this month to Stephen Cheung, who lives in Lowestoft but comes from even farther east, in Hong Kong.

He sent me the cutting here from a Hong Kong newspaper, showing a Kowloon Motor Bus Dennis Trident that has apparently been adapted to run on rails. Or off them, if you look more closely.

Stephen tells me that, while running empty, the Trident's driver tried to cross the Kowloon Canton Railway. Unfortunately, he chose to do this as a KCR tram was approaching and the resulting collision nudged the bus 20m along the track and hospitalised the bus driver and four tram passengers.

Keep your eyes open, your camera primed and scissors at the ready for your own offbeat colour picture opportunities and send the results to me at the usual address. You, too, could win a Corgi diecast.

For further information on Corgi, visit the website at www.corgiclassics.com or for details of your local stockist, call Corgi customer services on 0845 603 9070.



"JOB SATISFACTION"

"The MSc in Passenger Transport Management gave me confidence in my ideas, in-depth knowledge and an indescribable feeling of satisfaction"

Damon Pendlebury MILT

Area Controller, Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive (GMPTE)

DISTANCE LEARNING COURSES

CILT(UK) Level 4 Professional Diploma in Logistics and Transport

- **Transport Modules**
Flexible starting dates

MSc in

- **Passenger Transport Management**
Apply now for October

Other courses available

For further information, contact Jacqui Bruce

www.ciltuk.org.uk

Tel +44 (0)1536 740124

e-mail: courses12@ciltuk.org.uk

Please state which course you are interested in.

 The Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (UK)



New shape on Brighton seafront

A Turkish newcomer was launched at the UK Coach Rally, where a new twist on a best seller was judged Coach of the Year

Had you ventured along Madeira Drive on Brighton seafront on 16 or 17 April when the 51st UK Coach Rally was in full flow, your attention might well have been drawn to an unfamiliar, yet competent white coach sitting in the spring sunshine.

This 55-seater, carrying the fleetnames of Bibby's of Ingleton, was the first Turkish-built Temsa Safari for the UK. It would have attracted visitors' attention in any event, but

drew even more as many of the biggest names in coach manufacturing chose not to exhibit in the trade section at Brighton this year. No Volvo, no Scania, no EvoBus. Ironically, that meant that one of them also missed out on seeing one of its products judged Coach of the Year — out of 65 contenders — for the first time since 1992.

Twelve months after the TransBus collapse cast a pall over the 50th rally, it was good to see Plaxton — the UK's only full-size luxury coach manufacturer — back among the trade exhibitors and with its name shouting out loud from the sides of the coaches used for the driving test finals.

A name to be reckoned with

Temsa is a marque to be reckoned with, as it offers the potent combination of low

Above: The Temsa Safari for Bibby's of Ingleton only arrived with Arriva Bus & Coach on the Monday before the rally weekend.

manufacturing costs and west European engineering expertise to produce what should be a top class coach. Its expertise includes former Neoplan designer Bob Lee and, on the sales side, one Wim Van Hool.

The 12m rear-engined Safari integral is already selling well in France and Germany, and has secured repeat orders from PostBus in Austria, which previously bought from mainstream west European manufacturers. Most of those coaches have MAN engines, but the right-hand-drive UK version has a 310hp DAF PF 9.2litre unit — the smaller of the two DAF engines offered in the VDL SB4000.

Put the UK specification down to the fact that Arriva Bus & Coach — the VDL importer and dealer once known as Stanley Hughes — is the face of Temsa in the UK. It sees the Safari as an entry-level model in its range, filling a gap left since it stopped selling the old DAF SB3000 with Plaxton or Hungarian-built Ikarus coachwork. Given that DAF Trucks only has a minority shareholding in VDL Bus, the Safari is almost as much a DAF as an SB4000; both carry equally prominent 'powered by DAF' badging.

Arriva only offers coaches with automatic transmission and the Safaris being sold here have six-speed ZF 6HP592 gearboxes. The Bibby's coach — for a loyal Arriva/VDL/DAF customer — is to a basic specification with 55 Kiel seats. It is the first of an initial batch of 10 that Arriva has ordered; two others have already been sold to as-yet-unnamed customers.

It only arrived in England on the Monday before the rally, but initial reactions — especially to the build quality and ride — have



Left: One of two left-hand-drive BMC Megastar minibuses in the trade display.



Left: The Indcar Wing-bodied Iveco Daily 22-seater that BASE launched at Brighton.



Left: After qualifying in their own vehicles, the Driver of the Year finalists undertook manoeuvres in this Plaxton Paragon-bodied Volvo B12B demonstrator.

its range to include Spanish-built Indcar Wing midicoaches on Iveco Daily 65C15 chassis. An example of the standard 22-seater was on show. It's also offering a 26-seater with an additional row of seats within the same length, but sees potential for the 22-seater — which is exempt from Disability Discrimination Act requirements — in a market dominated by the Caetano Optimo-bodied Toyota Coaster.

TGM, Volvo and Van Hool triumph

In recent times, there has been something predictable about the Coach of the Year in the rally itself. It would almost certainly be a German integral. If it wasn't a Neoplan Starliner — winner in five of the previous six years — then it probably was a Setra, which won 11 of the rallies between 1982 and 2002. These all were fine coaches, but it was good to see something else win this year, and indeed for that to be a tiny bit more typical of the coaches that most UK fleets operate.

It's only fair to add that there were no Starliners in the rally — a new version launched at last year's Hanover Show has still to reach the UK — nor did Parry's International, which provided the winning Skyliners in 2000, 2003 and 2004, enter this year.

Given that Volvo has been market leader for more than 20 years, it has only had four previous Coaches of the Year in this event — in 1980, 1981, 1988 and 1992. Van Hool coachwork — again one of the most popular makes in the market — has only graced six previous winners between 1972 and 1992.

This year's champion, like that of 13 years ago, was entered by Tellings-Golden Miller. Then, it was a high-floor Alizée-bodied B10M; this year's was altogether more special — a 14m tri-axle B12B with an Alicron body equipped with 36 seats and 10 tables. It is the first extra-long coach to win the award and was one of nine entered in the rally. Last year, there were just two, so here was apparent evidence of the gradual move towards longer coaches.



Above: The short extra window behind the entrance shows that SN05 FBE is a 12.8m Bova Futura. Its owner, Prentice Westwood, is based in West Calder, West Lothian.

been favourable although Arriva has a few modifications in mind for areas like the overhead lockers.

Temsa isn't the first Turkish manufacturer to break into the UK market, but it is competing at the heart of the market rather than in the midicoach sector in which BMC offers its Cummins-powered Probus 850, an example of which was in the trade area. BMC (UK) is part of a multi-franchise import operation that intends to offer the Chinese-made, Cummins-

powered King Long as its 12m contender; it hoped to have the first King Long at last year's Coach & Bus show and was still awaiting its arrival over the Brighton weekend.

However, BMC did have new product to show in the shape of two left-hand-drive van-derived Megastar minibuses; these were 12-seaters, but right-hand-drive offerings will include 16-seaters.

BASE, the Marcopolo and MAN dealer in the Holmeswood Coaches Group, has broadened



Coach of the Year, Tellings-Golden Miller's newly delivered 14m Van Hool Alicron-bodied Volvo B12B tri-axle, GS05 TGM, waits to pick up its trophies.



Left: Fenn Holidays of March, Cambridgeshire entered MR05 FEN, one of two 14m DAF-powered Van Hool Aston T917 integrals in this year's rally.



Below left: Regular rally entrant Rambler Coaches of Hastings brought 1924 RH, a 14-year-old Plaxton Paramount 3500-bodied Volvo B10M updated by Blackpool Coach Services with restyled front dash and Setra-influenced side flashes.

Two of the longer vehicles only barely count as such. These were 12.2m Irizar PB-bodied Scania K114s (for Roadliner of Poole and National Express), as seat/pillar spacing only works on this model with 200mm extra length.

Buzzlines entered a 12.9m PB-bodied K124. The longest two-axle coaches were Paul S. Winson's 12.8m Jonckheere-bodied Volvo B12B (which also was in last year's rally) and 12.8m Bova Futura FHD13-340s for Prentice Westwood and L. J. Edwards; short windows directly behind the door and cab betray the extra length of the Bovas.

Like the winning Volvo, the other extra-long coaches were tri-axes — two 14m DAF-powered Van Hool Aston T917s (for Goodwin's of Manchester and Fenn Holidays of March).

Unusual Ayats, amazing Paramounts

A model of Ayats integral not seen before in a UK fleet was a 12m MAN-powered Platinum for Meridian Line Travel, based at Flint Cross, just east of Royston, Hertfordshire.

Heads also were turned by two of the older coaches in the event, Plaxton Paramount 3500-bodied Volvo B10Ms of Hastings-based Rambler Coaches and K&J Travel of York. They are among 10 late-1980s/early-1990s Paramounts rebuilt by Blackpool Coach Services on the site of the old Duple factory with new mouldings influenced by the 'La Linea' side flashes found on current Setras. Styling is by John Worker, who helped develop the Duple 425.

Driver of the Year — for the first time — was Mark Shaw of The Travellers Choice at Carnforth.



Left: Genuine 'La Linea' flashes on 28 (BX05 UVM), a Setra S415HD entered by City Circle UK of London.

Below: Meridian Line Travel's Select-registered 0005 MLT, believed to be the first MAN-powered Ayats Platinum coach for a UK operator.





UITP Mobility & City Transport Exhibition

Fiera di Roma, 6-9 June 2005



Worldwide mobility actors meet in Rome

Held in conjunction with the 56th UITP World Congress

Registration is free of charge for professional visitors
Register online: www.uitp.com/rome2005/

WIN A RIDE BACK INSIDE ALDENHAM!

London Transport's Aldenham bus works was a facility like no other. It was where many postwar buses — especially the legendary RTs and Routemasters — were taken apart, overhauled and reassembled as new. Indeed, such was the level of standardisation that LT often transferred the identity of one bus entering Aldenham into another coming off its production line.

British Transport Films captured this extraordinary facility on a publicity film, *Overhaul*, in 1957 when the 'factory' was new and the RT class was at its peak as the front-line London bus. It's a classic newsreel production with a clipped English commentary that marvels at what Aldenham could achieve.

It's one of three main BTF features on *The London Bus*, a 56min DVD compilation by Beulah. The others are *The Nine Road*, a 1976 film that follows a day's work on route 9 in the heyday of the Routemaster, and *Omnibus 150*, which commemorated the 150th anniversary of the birth of London bus services in 1979.

These professionally produced films are period pieces, which will delight enthusiasts and many of their less bus-obsessed families and friends.

Normally, they sell for £14.95, but we're offering **SIX** as prizes in this month's easy-to-enter competition. All you need to do is send in the correct answers to the three questions below about Aldenham to arrive no later than **Thursday 30 June**. We will announce the **SIX** winners in *August Buses*.



QUESTIONS

1) Where is Aldenham?

☐ HERTFORDSHIRE ☐ SURREY ☐ ESSEX

2) When did the bus works open?

☐ 1946 ☐ 1950 ☐ 1956

3) Latterly, Aldenham was managed by a London Transport subsidiary with the initials BEL. What did these stand for?

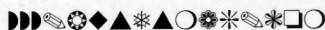
○ Battersea, Eltham & Lewisham ○ Bus Engineering Ltd
○ Badly Engineered Leylands

NAME			
ADDRESS			
	POSTCODE		

Please mark your answers with a tick or cross and send this coupon (or a photocopy) to **BUSES DVD COMPETITION, PO Box 3759, Glasgow, G41 5YN.**

RULES

The Editor's decision is final and no correspondence can be entered into. The prizes are as described and there is no cash alternative. The competition is not open to employees of Ian Allan Publishing or *Buses* magazine.

The logo for IAN ALLAN BOOKSHOPS. It features a stylized 'IA' inside a square frame on the left, followed by the text 'IAN ALLAN' in a large, bold, sans-serif font, and 'BOOKSHOPS' in a slightly smaller, bold, sans-serif font below it. The entire logo is white on a dark blue background.

**YOUR ONE-STOP SHOP FOR TRANSPORT
BOOKS, MAGAZINES, DIE-CAST, VIDEO & DVD**



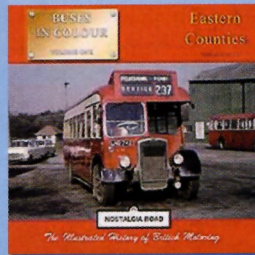
Manchester 2005
PMP Video
60 mins, Colour
VHS £16.00 DVD £16.00



Routemaster Rundown
Buses Around the London Sights, Vol 5
60 mins, Colour
VHS £12.95 DVD £12.95



Major Operators F-M
Inc. Go-Ahead, London Utd, Metroliner etc
TAG Publications
200pp, SB
£13.00



Eastern Counties
Buses in Colour, Volume One
Gee
52pp, SB
£9.95

LATEST RELEASES

London Transport in Colour, 1950-1969 (McCormack)		£14.99
East Kent - Glory Days (Kraemer-Johnson & Bishop)		£16.99
South West Bus Handbook (British Bus Publishing)		£15.25
Major Operators N-Z (TAG Publications)		£12.00
West Riding 2 - Super Prestige 8 (Allen)		£16.95
Growing Up with Buses - Prestige 29 (Turner)		£9.50
Autobus de Paris (Machure & Vielliard, French text)		£24.99
Routemaster Twilight in London (112 mins, Colour)	DVD	£19.99
West Yorkshire 2005 (60 mins, Colour)	VHS £16.00 DVD £16.00	
Derby & Nottingham 2004/5 (60 mins, Colour)	VHS £16.00 DVD £16.00	
Bus Spot Cheltenham (60 mins, Colour)	VHS £16.00 DVD £16.00	
Bus Spot Southampton (60 mins, Colour)	VHS £16.00 DVD £16.00	

bookshops@ianallanpublishing.co.uk

■ BIRMINGHAM

47 Stephenson Street, Birmingham. B2 4DH
Tel: 0121 643 2496 Fax: 0121 643 6855

■ **CARDIFF**

31 Royal Arcade, Cardiff. CF10 1AE
Tel: 029 2039 0615 Fax: 029 2039 0621

■ LONDON

45/46 Lower Marsh, Waterloo, London. SE1 7RG
Tel: 020 7401 2100 Fax: 020 7401 2887

■ MANCHESTER

5 Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester. M1 2GH
Tel: 0161 237 9840 Fax: 0161 237 9921

THESE PRODUCTS ARE ALSO AVAILABLE MAIL ORDER FROM:

Midland Counties Publications

4 Watling Drive, Sketchley Industrial Estate, Hinckley, Leics. LE10 3EY

Tel: 01455 254 450 Fax: 01455 233 737

Email: midlandbooks@compuserve.com www.midlandcountiessuperstore.com

P&P - PLEASE ADD 10% IN UK (Min £2.50/Max £5.00) 20% OVERSEAS (Min £6.00)

BUSES

A's Models of Bolton

Dept B, P.O. Box 514, Bolton, BL1 5YD. Please ring between 9:30am-8:00pm 6 Days.

Tel: 01204 467961 or Mobile: 07788 106064. Website: www.asmodelsofbolton.co.uk

Mail order only (*UK RECORDED DELIVERY POST FREE*)

UK Next day by Amtrak extra, overseas at cost Please pay cheques / postal orders to A's Models of Bolton

E.F.E. MAY-JUNE RELEASES 2005

E12307 Harrington Grenadier North Western	£15.75
E15002 Leyland National Brighton & Hove	£15.75
E20633 Plaxton Pointer 1 Western National	£15.75
E24604 Beaver 1 South Wales Transport	£15.75

E.F.E. 60th Anniversary of VE Day Collection

E99200 AEC Regal 10T10 London Transport	£18.75
E99202 Daimler Utility London Transport	£18.75
E99203 Guy Arab II Utility London Transport	£18.75
E99204 AEC STL London Transport	£18.75



E99205 Guy Arab II Utility Southdown	£18.75
E99206 Daimler Utility Birmingham City	£18.75
E99207 Leyland TD1 Plymouth City Transport	£18.75

E.F.E. RECENT RELEASES

E10130 AEC RT London Transport	£25.75
E13915 Bristol Lodekka FLF Western SMT	£16.75
E13916 Bristol Lodekka FLF Stagecoach Hull	£15.75
E14011 Bristol Lodekka FLF SMT	£16.75
E14404 Leyland National MK1 London United	£25.75
E15633 Routemaster RM Golden Jubilee Arriva	£25.75
E15634 Routemaster RM Stagecoach Magicbus	£15.75
E15805 Leyland PD1 Lowbridge Central SMT	£16.75
E16406 AEC RT Bus London Transport	£25.75
E16009 Leyland PD2 Ulster Transport	£15.75
E16121 Leyland PD2 Highbridge Bradford	£15.75
E16217 Bristol MW Coach West Yorkshire	£15.75
E16218 Bristol MW Hants & Dorset	£15.75
E16523 Leyland Atlantean Scout Gay Hostess	£30.75
E17702 Leyland National MKII Go Northern	£15.75
E17901 AEC Routemaster RM London Transport	£25.75
E18006 Daimler Fleetline Nottingham City	£15.75
E18807 Daimler Fleetline MCW Belfast	£15.75
E20130 Bedford OB Western SMT	£15.75
E20131 Bedford OB Coach Wallace Arnold	£16.75
E20203 Leyland STD London Transport	£15.75
E20432 Bristol VRH ECW Devon General	£16.75
E20433 Bristol VRH ECW Alder Valley	£16.75
E20436 Bristol VRH Yorkshire Rider Bradford	£16.75
E20621 Plaxton Pointer 1 County Bus Lea Valley	£16.75
E22512 Alexander Y Type Western red and cream	£17.75
E24810 Mercedes Beaver 1 Devon General	£15.75
E24814 Mercedes Beaver 1 First Eastern Counties	£18.75
E24903 Mercedes Benz Beaver 1 Mini Metro	£15.75
E25603 AEC Routemaster RCL Coach Greenline	£35.75
E26314 Guy Arab II Utility Stockport	£16.75
E26603 Paramount 3500 Plymouth Citybus	£12.75
E26604 Paramount 3500 Greenline Invictaway	£12.75
E26611 Paramount 3500 Yorkshire Traction	£12.75
E27611 Volvo Endurance Arriva Merseyside	£16.75
E27901 DMS O/T Big Bus Co Tour of London	£18.75
E28809 Leyland Titan TN15 Blackburn Transport	£16.75
E29402 Bristol RELH Coach United	£22.75
E29404 Bristol RELH Dual Purpose East Midland	£16.75
E29501 Bristol Panorama Greyhound	£15.75
E29502 Bristol Plaxton Panorama Type B United	£16.75
E29605 Leyland Olympian Type B Go North East	£15.75
E29606 Leyland Olympian Type B Maidstone & D	£15.75
E29607 Leyland Olympian Type B London United	£16.75
E29801 Dennis Pathfinder London & Country	£17.75
E29803 Dennis Pathfinder Badgerline	£15.75

BRITBUS

AS2-03 AEC Swift SMS London Transport	£27.75
---------------------------------------	--------



GL01 Guy Arab III Southampton	£32.75
GL02 Guy Arab III Grahams of Paisely (June)	£32.75
GL07 Guy Arab III Provincial Long Bonnet	£32.75
GS04 Guy Arab III Newport Corporation	£32.75
N6106 Scania MCW Metropolitan Trathens	£32.75
N6213 Scania MCW Metropolitan London T	£32.75

CORGI O.O.C. JULY-DEC 2005 NEW RELEASES

July	
OM41209 Wright Gemini Yorkshire Coastliner	£18.75
OM41305 Bendibus Fushion Dublin Bus	£24.75
OM44108 Optare Solo Burton	£18.75
August	
OM42511 Vyking Lincs Road Car	£18.75
OM45310 Futura Kings of Colchester	£18.75
OM99172 Metrobus SLF & Lolyne	£39.75
September	
OM41210 Wright Gemini Travel Dundee	£18.75
OM44705 Pointer 2 Scottish Citylink	£18.75
OM45901 Van Hool T9 Shearings (New)	£18.75
October	
OM42411 Panorama 1 Barton	£18.75
OM40904 Leyland PD2 Orion Exeter	£18.75
November	
OM42512 Vyking Bus Eireann	£18.75
OM45902 Van Hool T9 Nat. Express	£18.75
December	
OM41211 Wright Gemini First London	£18.75
OM44109 Optare Solo Strathtay	£18.75

CORGI O.O.C. RECENT RELEASES

OM40305 Seagull Barton Transport	£18.75
OM40801 Bristol FS Southdown	£15.75
OM40805 Bristol FS United Counties	£15.75
OM40811 Bristol FS Southern Vectis	£20.75
OM40812 Bristol FS Bristol Omnibus	£20.75
OM41102 Daimler CVG6 E. L. Huddersfield	£15.75
OM41103 Leyland PD3A Accrington	£15.75
OM41105 Daimler CVG6 Bolton	£15.75
OM41107 Leyland PD3 Ramsbottom	£20.75
OM41109 Daimler CVG6 Bradford	£18.75
OM41202 Wright Gemini Arriva London	£15.75
OM41203 Wright Gemini T.W. Midland	£15.75
OM41207 Wright Gemini Yellow Buses	£18.75



OM41301 Solar Fusion Go-Ahead North East	£24.75
OM41302 Solar Fusion Nottingham City	£18.75
OM41303 Fusion First Hampshire	£24.75
OM41304 Fusion First London	£24.75
42402 Panorama 1 Southdown	£45.75
OM42409 Panorama 1 LUT	£15.75
OM42410 Panorama 1 Yellowways	£18.75



OM42510 Vyking Delaine of Bourne	£19.75
OM42701 Van Hool Alizee Whippets Coaches	£15.75
OM43101 Leyland Lynx London & Country	£15.75
OM43308 Premiere Tellings Golden Miller	£13.75
OM43402 Beaver 2 East Yorkshire	£15.75
OM43705 3-axle Trolleybus Rotherham Corp.	£15.75
OM43706 BUT Trolleybus Glasgow	£15.75
OM43707 Q1 Trolleybus London Transport	£20.75
OM43708 Q1 Trolleybus London Transport	£20.75
OM43908 Daimler Utility Belfast Corporation	£15.75
OM44104 Optare Solo First Essex	£16.75
OM44105 Optare Solo First Manchester	£15.75
OM45110 Metrobus MK1 Post Office	£15.75
OM44201 Neoplan Cityliner Oak Hall	£10.75
OM44701 Pointer 2 Lothian Regional Transport	£16.75
OM44702 Pointer 2 Metroline	£16.75
OM44703 Pointer 2 Thamesdown	£16.75
45106 MCW Metrobus Go Northern	£20.75
OM45309 Bova Futura Maynes of Buckie	£16.75
OM45701 AEC Q London Transport	£25.75

MIRROR IMAGE MODELS 1:76 BUS KITS

M1 Volvo B6BLE MK1 Crusader	£28.00
-----------------------------	--------



CREATIVE MASTER NORTHCORD 1:76 SCALE

UKBUS0005 President O/T Glasgow Tour	£17.75
UKBUS0007 President O/T Cambridge	£17.75



UKBUS1006 ALX400 East Yorkshire	£19.75
UKBUS1007 ALX400 Travel West Midlands	£19.75
UKBUS1012 ALX400 Stagecoach Manchester	£20.75
UKBUS1014 ALX400 Oxford Park & Ride	£20.75
UKBUS1015 ALX400 Stagecoach P&R Cambridge	£25.75
UKBUS1016 ALX400 Stagecoach A1 Service	£25.75
UKBUS1017 ALX400 London United	£25.75
UKBUS1018 ALX400 First London	£21.75
UKBUS1019 ALX400 Stagecoach East Kent (May)	£21.75



UKBUS1020 ALX400 London United back the bid	£21.75
UKBUS2001 President O/T Lothian Tour	£12.75
UKBUS2005 President First London	£25.75
UKBUS2006 President Brighton & Hove	£25.75
UKBUS2007 President Maynes of Manchester	£20.75
UKBUS2012 President Stagecoach Brookes Bus	£21.75
UKBUS3003 Plaxton MPD 8.8m Metroline	£17.75
UKBUS3006 Plaxton MPD 8.8m London Central	£17.75
UKBUS3007 Plaxton MPD 8.8m Go-North East	£17.75
UKBUS3008 Plaxton MPD 8.8m London United	£17.75
UKBUS3009 Plaxton MPD 8.8m Southern Vectis	£17.75
UKBUS3010 Plaxton MPD 8.8m Bluebird	£17.75



UKBUS3013 Plaxton MPD 8.8m East Yorkshire	£17.75
UKBUS4001 Alexander Royale Lothian (May)	£21.75
UKBUS4002 A/der Royale Yorkshire Coastliner	£21.75
UKBUS5001 Mercedes Citaro 2axle First London	£21.75
UKBUS5101 Mercedes Citaro 3axle Artic Demo	£24.75
UKBUS5102 Citaro 3axle Artic S/coach London	£24.75

Models will be dispatched once in stock following clearance of payment



The boarding area inside Digbeth. This picture was provided by the company that supplied the elasticated barriers leading to the departure gates.

To Digbeth, beyond and back again

ALAN MILLAR puts three National Express coach services — and three coach stops — to the test

Twenty years ago, *Buses* ended a series of 18 articles called 'On the Coach Roads of Britain' in which correspondents sampled various long-distance services. Express coach travel boomed following deregulation in October 1980 and during some lengthy railway strikes in the years that followed. The boom tailed off, but the market is reviving again with National Express carrying 6% more

passengers last year and Stagecoach reporting growth on Megabus.com services into London.

These developments prompted me to put three National Express routes to the test in early April when I needed to travel from London to Worcester on a Wednesday afternoon, on to Newport the next day and back again to Birmingham the following afternoon. There is a direct London-

Worcester service — journey time 3hr 40min via Heathrow — but I chose the half-hourly London-Birmingham NXL Shuttle launched last September.

NatEx operates this directly using 14 of its own Irizar PB-bodied Scania K114s with plush leather seats; similar coaches — operated by First — have since upgraded the London-Bristol route. Advertised journey times vary, with most a shade under 3hr between Victoria and Digbeth coach stations. The Digbeth-Newport connection forms a

Below: National Express NXL2 (YN04 GKP), one of the Irizar PB-bodied Scania K114s on the London Shuttle, at Digbeth last September. **MARK LYONS**





Above: East Yorkshire 38 (3277 KH), the Plaxton Expressliner 2-bodied Volvo B10M on which we travelled, leaves Newport bus station for Cardiff and Brecon at around 17.05. It set out from Scarborough at 08.20 that morning. **ALAN MILLAR**

short — around 2hr — part of longer routes between South Wales and Yorkshire or Scotland, with four return journeys offered on weekdays, a fifth on Friday and Sunday evenings.

On-line booking

One of the biggest changes our 1980s correspondents would discover is that you can buy your tickets from home. Stagecoach only offers Megabus booking by Internet or phone. NatEx took 20% of its bookings on the 'net last year and, unlike its rival, doesn't levy an additional 50p booking fee.

I wanted to make several bookings and pay for them in a single credit card transaction, but if the NatEx system allowed me to do that, I didn't discover how to make it happen. Separate bookings and payments for the London-Birmingham and Birmingham-Newport-Birmingham journeys, as I was reminded a few days later, was a tiny price to pay for what remains a far faster purchasing experience. In any case, there is no financial penalty, as — unlike budget airlines — NatEx doesn't charge extra for card transactions.

With Megabus competing on the London route, NatEx offers bargain basement Funnafares for early bookers. I booked seven days in advance of the first journey and the website gave me 10min — with its clock ticking as I went through the process — to reserve a £6 single on the 15.30 from Victoria. The best deals for the Newport round trip were £20 or £21.50; there was no pressure to make a rapid booking. I went for the £21.50 deal, as there seemed to be more chance of amending the booking later. As with airline bookings, the website provided me with e-tickets — e-mailed confirmations to be printed out and shown to the drivers.

The tickets included an instruction for drivers to note down the number on the reverse of their waybills. Procedures may have changed, for the nearest I saw was when one of them wrote something on the palm of one hand.

My smug satisfaction at securing the £6 NXL Shuttle journey melted away on the Wednesday afternoon as an earlier appointment ran too late for me to make the 15.30 departure — and certainly the 15.20 advised check-in time. It was nearer 15.40 when I reached Victoria, resigned to accepting that I must regard the £6 ticket as a throwaway purchase.

Think of all the most frustrating post office queues you have stood in and you may get the picture of queuing in Victoria's sepulchral booking hall. Most ticket windows are closed and there is a steady lowering and lifting of blinds as clerks change shifts. The queue is slow as many people appear to have complicated travel requests, and one of the windows is open primarily to

hand out pre-booked tickets and only takes people from the main queue when it isn't otherwise in demand.

I finally buy a £14 ticket at 15.58 — for the 16.30 departure. This still is okay and I reckon £20 remains a bargain compared with a walk-on train fare — or the cost of fuelling a car for the journey.

www.nationalexpress.com ticket confirmation			
You must print this ticket and show it to the driver as you board every coach.			
** DO NOT HAND THIS TO THE DRIVER **			
e-Ticket Customer printable ticket			
Ticket number :	ETJ50272		
Booking name :	Mr A L Millar (lead passenger)		
Passenger count:	1 adult		
Booking made :	31 March 2005 (NE_12662195_58472324)		
Amount charged :	£21.50 for tickets to the credit / debit card ending		
Outward journey leg 1 :			
Depart	Time / Date / Service	Arrive	Time / Date
BIRMINGHAM Digbeth coach station, West Midlands	15:00 07 Apr 2005 NX322	NEWPORT bus station, Gwent	16:55 07 Apr 2005
Ref : ILZT-01-2MV2			
Return journey leg 1 :			
Depart	Time / Date / Service	Arrive	Time / Date
NEWPORT bus station, Gwent	15:50 08 Apr 2005 NX320	BIRMINGHAM Digbeth coach station, West Midlands	18:05 08 Apr 2005
Ref : MDUE-01-202T			
Note. You must be at the departure point at least 10 minutes prior to the departure of the coach. Please note your seat is only guaranteed between the points specified on your ticket.			
We have attempted to send an email confirmation to alan@millar1.demon.co.uk			
In an emergency only, please call 0121 6251278			
Thank you for your booking and we hope you have an enjoyable journey.			
Journey amendments can be made to e-Tickets prior to travel by calling 08705 808080 (from 08:00 to 20:00) and selecting option 3. A £2.00 amendment fee will apply so please have your credit/debit card details to hand. Please note that an excess fare will also be charged where a higher fare category applies.			
e-Tickets are non refundable.			
Driver :	Do not collect this sheet, simply note down the ticket number on the reverse of your waybill. Any queries call OCC		
www.nationalexpress.com is © National Express Ltd.		PLEASE NOTE : With exception to our General Conditions of Carriage, cancellations and refunds	

Even more than with local bus journeys, coach travel is judged by the pre-boarding waiting experience. NatEx has built some fine new coach stations in Liverpool and Manchester. London Victoria is a Transport for London facility, but its owner has kept this 73-year-old terminal up to the standards today's travellers expect. The basement location of the toilets isn't ideal, but at street level you'll find a cafeteria, several retail outlets and a decent number of seats in glazed waiting areas next to the clearly indicated departure bays. Staff announce when your coach is ready.

Digbeth — as NatEx is well aware — is everything that Victoria isn't. This dark shed is within sight of the Bull Ring Rotunda and silver-studded Selfridges, but is surrounded by light industrial buildings with names like Barry's Fabrics in a part of Birmingham as yet untouched by urban renewal. The walk into the city centre involves several confusing new-style pedestrian crossings on which officialdom has moved the red and green illuminated 'cross now' men next to the push buttons rather than on the opposite lamp posts where most of us still expect to find them.

Midland Red built a depot here in 1929 and in a history written over 20 years ago, Roy Anderson described Digbeth as 'where the sparrows cough; they don't chirp'. Sparrows might sing again in today's lower exhaust emissions, but it's a dismal place with painted brickwork, poor lighting and sheep pen-like departure queues each with at best only four seats for the exhausted and elderly. There is a cafeteria — called Diggers — and a waiting room, but the most prominent catering is by armour-plated vending machines facing the departure bays. NatEx tried and failed to replace Digbeth with new coach stations in Heartlands and Snow Hill, but has commissioned top architect Ken Shuttleworth to design a landmark replacement on the existing site. That cannot come a day too soon.

NatEx is but a fleeting visitor to the busy Newport bus station used primarily by

Newport Bus, Stagecoach and Glyn Williams. It's hard to believe that the city's mayor opened this desolate monstrosity — like a Soviet Bloc film set — only 11 years ago and surely its planned replacement will offer better facilities for all passengers, especially those catching coaches.

The coach bays — open to the elements — are next to a taxi rank but at the opposite end from the platform-level toilets. On the lengthy walk between the two, there's a dowdy newsagent-cum-convenience store with an access ramp of alpine proportions, a Newport Bus enquiry office and a council re-housing office; there are some seats next to the coach bays. The adjacent Ferris's Café offers no obvious non-smoking area (NatEx bans smoking on its coaches), but it's indoors and prices are cheap. Where else might you buy a coffee and filled roll for £1.60?

Out on the road

An abiding impression of all three journeys was how few passengers each 49-seat coach carried — 20 on the NXL Shuttle, around the same from Birmingham to Newport and just 15 on the way back on the Friday afternoon. The cross-country routes through Digbeth feed into other services and total profits at the NatEx coach division rose by 18% last year to £18.8 million. But if it filled more seats, or persuaded more passengers to pay 25% extra to reserve the empty one next to them, a money-spinner might become a goldmine.

People will measure NatEx by its punctuality and my three coaches did well, thanks partly to there being no obstructive roadworks. Each observed its advertised departure time and two — the NXL Shuttle and the Newport-Birmingham journey — were early at Digbeth. The Shuttle — which uses the A40, M40, M42 and A45 — was 9min within its 3hr advertised running time; it was held up in heavy west London traffic, but no one wanted the request stop in Solihull.

The coach from Newport — a brand new Bebbs Travel Volvo B12B/Jonckheere Mistral heading from Cardiff to Bradford — arrived

18min ahead of its 2hr 15min schedule. The southbound coach — a five-year-old East Yorkshire B10M/Plaxton Expressliner 2 en route from Scarborough to Brecon — was 8min late into Newport on a journey scheduled at 1hr 55min. The difference in advertised times is because the northbound coach is supposed to call at Worcester-Warndon, off Junction 6 of the M5. Put the difference in punctuality down to two extra litres of Volvo power and missing out its stop at Warndon. Most of this route is on motorway (M5 and M50) and dual carriageway (A40 and A449).

It may just have been me, but the PB's leather seats provided less back comfort than the cloth ones on the two Volvos. To be fair, I also sat in the Scania for one hour longer. The two newer rear-engined coaches had lap-and-diagonal seatbelts, the B10M lap belts only; they also were quieter than the B10M.

All three drivers made public address announcements. The NXL Shuttle man — whose radio also cut in with traffic reports — provided updates on our estimated arrival time, told us where to find the emergency exits, fire extinguisher and first aid kit, and encouraged us to use the rubbish bags and complete the questionnaires (lots of questions about lifestyle and leisure pursuits) left on each seat. He was the only one to introduce himself by name.

The other two confined themselves largely to departure and arrival announcements, the Bebbs man also advising that seatbelts be worn and that consumption of alcohol or hot food — specifically chips, burgers, pies or pasties — wasn't permitted. Shame this wasn't enforced on the Shuttle, as fried chicken fumes wafted from the seat behind at Victoria.

My colleague Julian Osborne might recognise one consistent feature of all three coaches. None of their clocks told the correct time. A week-and-a-half into British Summer Time, the NXL Shuttle clock was 69min slow and the East Yorkshire Expressliner was 57min slow, with only the top half of the digital display working. The Bebbs clock was switched off — showing 88.88 in grey. If

knowing the time matters to you, don't leave your watch at home.

Overall, I couldn't fault NatEx on the fundamentals. The coaches ran to time from where I expected to find them, were comfortably ventilated, had decent elbow and legroom and were driven safely by customer friendly drivers. Two of the coach stations could be better, but it's still excellent value when you consider that I originally paid just £27.50 for 7hr travel.



Left: Bebbs Travel CN54 HFH, one of the Jonckheere Mistral-bodied Volvo B12Bs used on services between South Wales and Bradford. It was leaving Digbeth for Aberdare on 22 April.
TONY HUNTER

First off the rails

As **MALCOLM FLYNN** explains, FirstGroup is building up a division to provide rail-replacement coaches

While Stagecoach and National Express have their long distance express coach services, First has quietly been establishing a niche business to provide a nationwide rail replacement bus and coach service.

It helps that it currently has three train operating franchises — Great Western, Trans-Pennine Express and ScotRail — but the division doesn't confine itself to in-house work and also wants to provide similar services for airports when bad weather diverts flights from their intended destinations. It also helps that First has one

dedicated coaching subsidiary, First Coaches (formerly First Wessex) in Bristol, but the fact that the new division is based in Lancashire betrays the roots of this venture.

First Rail Replacement Coaches began operating in May 2003, using experience gained the previous year in providing buses and transport organisation for the Commonwealth Games in Manchester. Managerial resources were provided by First CentreWest in London and the division rented space within a Scania dealership at Old Trafford, Manchester where it installed a Portakabin, a phone line, computer and fuel

tank to support a fleet of 19 Wright Solar-bodied Scania L94UBs. These buses, in Rail-Link livery, provided replacement services during the West Coast Blockade imposed on the Stoke line until September 2003.

Since then, First has either been the lead operator or a subcontractor to Fraser Eagle — another of the rail replacement specialists — in providing buses and coaches to cover planned railway engineering works.

Trafford Park and Burnley

The Portakabin has been replaced by the first floor of a modern building at Trafford Park, while six new Irizar Century-bodied Scania K114 coaches joined the eight remaining Solars there at the beginning of this year. First Manchester's Queens Road garage provides other buses as required. For now, all 14 Scania carry legal lettering for First Manchester at Oldham, but this may soon change.

Overall management of the division, however, is undertaken on an industrial estate at Simonstone, near Burnley, where managing director Maurice Duckworth — a former Fraser Eagle man — and his small team are based. A 24hr control room and call centre are being established to help build up First's presence in this market.

As most rail replacement work occurs at weekends, it's essential that First keeps the fleet busy all week. Trafford Park already operates First Manchester bus routes 10 and 26 on behalf of Queens Road on a 'cost only' basis. And the nationwide promotion of private hire phone number 0845 601 1333 — on all First buses and coaches — will put enquirers straight through to the Burnley call centre, which will then find a vehicle either from within First or from an approved operator.

Burnley also works closely with First Coaches on rail replacement work and with a third control centre at Rainham, Essex.

Maurice Duckworth says he is well aware of the pitfalls of providing such services. His team thoroughly compares coach duties with published rail timetables and often discovers that inaccuracies need to be amended. He says it is not good enough for drivers to turn up with their coaches and drive from A to B. They need route knowledge and to know exactly where pick-up points are at each location. He also ensures that co-ordinators are placed at appropriate locations to ensure the transition for passengers between bus and coach is handled smoothly and professionally.

Left: Wright Solar-bodied Scania L94UB 61223 (YM52 UVW) at Manchester Piccadilly while operating one of the West Coast Mainline replacement services. JAMES LAWRENCE



Above: Irizar Century-bodied Scania K114IB 23017 (YN54 APU) leaving Manchester Piccadilly for Sheffield on Sunday 20 March on a rail replacement service. As reported on page 10, this coach has since gone on extended loan to First's Aircoach subsidiary in Dublin, where it carries an Irish registration. LES LONG





When Irish assets are sweating

IAN MOLLOY explains why Bus Éireann has taken a leaf out of the airlines' books by keeping its express coaches' engines running for 16hr days

Since it took delivery of its first Plaxton-bodied DAF MB230 coaches 15 years ago, Bus Éireann has adopted a policy of keeping its front-line express coach fleet of new and nearly new vehicles in virtually continuous use throughout the long working day.

Before the PD-class arrived, the company worked almost exclusively on a system of allocating one vehicle per route or duty. But when PD1-3 entered service on Dublin-Cork route 8, they worked one-and-a-half round trips (approximately 495 miles) each weekday, with a coach leaving Dublin at 08.00, returning from Cork at 13.00, leaving Dublin again at 18.00 and finishing up overnight at Cork. Likewise, a Cork-based coach would be garaged every other night in Dublin.

Driver changeover took place at Urlingford, Co. Kilkenny, where all passengers availed of a 20min 'comfort stop'. This pattern on the Dublin-Cork route has continued, with Caetano-

bodied VC-class and Plaxton-bodied VP-class Volvos taking the place of the DAFs.

A productivity deal in 2000 led to drivers working right through to the end terminus rather than changing between coaches at Urlingford; this initiative improved reliability as delays in one direction no longer impacted on the other.

Service 20 (Dublin-Galway) also has many one-and-a-half round trips and indeed the first early-morning departures from both Dublin and Galway complete two full round trips. At 540 miles a day, this is surely the ultimate in fleet maximisation.

Each coach saved from the schedule means one less cost set, something that is especially transparent when the coaches are leased. But with the coaches owned by the company, it still means that much expensive capital is tied up in vehicles if the assets are not made to sweat as much as possible. Passengers benefit as more intensive use of the newest vehicles allows

Above: Caetano Algarve-bodied Volvo B10M VC106 (97 D 43875) waiting to leave Limerick on a local service to Bruff after working in on express service 15 (West Clare-Dublin). Destination blinds only contain main towns and cities, hence the paper bill for its local journey.

PHIL HALEWOOD

express coaches to be cascaded on to lighter local service duties after three or four years, then on to schools services.

The trend was greatly facilitated initially by the use of national destination blinds, first fitted in KE-class Bombardier coaches, and more recently with dot matrix and LED electronic destination displays that provide all destination possibilities for express, local, city and town services.

Back-to-back timetabling

From when new in 1991 until late-1995, Cork-based PD22/3 and Ballina-based PD34/5 covered the south to north-west Cork-Ballina service (via Limerick and Galway) and also extended at either end to provide for linked workings of the Ballina-Blacksod and Cork-Glengarriff routes.

In 1993, service 2 linking both Dublin and Tralee with Rosslare Harbour and service 40 between Tralee and Rosslare Harbour were linked together with coaches operating right through from end-to-end and traversing both the south-east and south coasts. For example, Van Hool integral CVH16 would depart Dublin in the early-morning, passing through Arklow, Wexford, Rosslare, Waterford, Dungarvan, Youghal, Cork, Macroom and Killarney to reach Tralee at 21.00. At the same time, Tralee-



Left: An April 1995 scene in Ballina, with Plaxton Paramount-bodied DAF MB230 PD23 (91 D 10023) taking up local service 467 to Belmullet and Blacksod. The coach was based then at Cork and had just come in on the arduous cross-country service 51 from its home city.

IAN MOLLOY

Right: A Cork bus in Donegal in July 1995. Van Hool Acron T815H EVH10 (SI 3010) was in Letterkenny, near the start of its return home from Derry on linked services. IAN MOLLOY

based coaches like PD14 could be seen passing through Stillorgan in south Dublin at approximately 20.00 each evening. By so doing, one or two coaches could be saved from the two combined routes.

Another linkage that applied from late-1996 connected services 425 (Longford-Galway) and 70 (Galway-Dundalk). At the same time, services 4 (Waterford-Dublin) and 32 (Dublin-Letterkenny) were linked with the early-morning Waterford-Dublin coach taking up the 11.45 service 32 departure to Letterkenny, from where it left for Dublin at 17.45. A Stranorlar coach working through to Waterford and Dungarvan reciprocated this two-day link.

Another back-to-back link introduced on 9 February last year brought together services 71 (Cork-Athlone) and 40 (Cork-Waterford). An additional 05.45 journey from Waterford served Cork Airport at 07.55, by-passing the city via the Jack Lynch Tunnel and finally reached Cork bus station at 08.30. The late-evening return working departed Cork Airport at 21.30 and reached Waterford at midnight. The late-evening driver-changeover took place at Youghal.

That airport service was discontinued this year owing to lack of sufficient patronage, but further new links have been created. Since late last year, the 07.15 service 23 (Sligo-Dublin) continues as a service 133 to Wicklow and returns towards Sligo from Wicklow at 13.00.

Most such workings entail two-day links, but some of them do not repeat until after three days and occasionally some coaches do not reappear at all or at least not for a long time after. However, the higher frequency on several routes, plus the increase in the number of express coaches, has eliminated the need for many inter-route workings.

Three-day links and 'squeeze' journeys

Three-day links began in 1992/93, with a coach covering two three-day links on Mondays to Saturdays and one round trip on Sundays. An example is that of services 64 (Derry-Galway) and 51 (Galway-Cork portion).

On Day 1, a Sligo-based coach would depart from its base at 10.00 and work through to Cork from where it would depart at 18.00 and return as far as Galway at 22.00. On Day 2, it would work an early-morning service to Cork and return to Galway from where it would cover a late-evening short working service 51 to Limerick. On Day 3, it would work another short service 51 to Cork, then back from Cork to Galway, followed by a service 64 back to Sligo. It would do the same over the next three days.

On that same three-day system, a Stranorlar coach would depart Derry at noon, reach Cork at 22.00 and then cover a local Cork service (e.g. Sreelane). On Day 2, it would cover either service 46 to Glengariff and back or service 71 to Athlone; it would then cover the 20.00 service 51 to Limerick.



Above: On one of the three-day links, Plaxton Premiere-bodied Volvo B10M VP31 (96 D 42493) is in Roscrea on its way to Athlone in November 1996. The windscreen vinyls relate to hurling. IAN MOLLOY

Next day, it would work from Limerick to Galway, Sligo and Derry. On Sundays, the coach would operate another round trip, such as Interlink Ireland service 76 (Sligo-Roscrea).

'Squeeze' journeys are achieved where express coaches also cover local services before or after their main run, thus saving the need for dedicated buses on these local services. This dates back at least to the late-1960s, but has been intensified in recent years. Another 'squeeze' manifestation is where a school bus works a return rural service between, say, 09.30 and 14.30 when it would otherwise lie idle. Some schoolbuses also provide relief express journeys on Friday and Sunday evenings.

Ireland's Bermuda Triangle

Although further efforts will likely be made to stretch the use of the coach fleet, the system has limitations. These include the 'Bermuda Triangle' effect of coaches disappearing off

the map, especially where a visiting coach's movements are not recorded on the local computer system. A few years ago, one CVH-class coach reputedly went on to a three-day link and was not pinpointed until about five weeks later when it was found to be in daily use on a local service in the opposite end of the country.

Finding a misplaced coach can take a lot of time and effort, especially if it is being 'hidden' by another depot. This appears to be the chief reason why services 2 and 40 have since been de-coupled.

There also is the safety concern where a coach misses a scheduled dock inspection that could include a tyre change or brake re-line. However, coaches due for docking and/or tyre inspections are sought some days ahead of due date to ensure that they are returned to home depot in time for scheduled inspection if they are not on an allocated link. Depots also have to fix responsibility for bodywork and other damage.

Service Extra

JULIAN OSBORNE is impressed by the bus company whose driver found his glasses and by his many meanderings across the Welsh border, but he worries about some managers' lack of awareness of what happens on their buses

Ever since the need for glasses arrived a few years ago, I've been bad at remembering where I last put them. On 4 February this got serious when it became clear that they'd been left on a bus. Worse, there were three buses in the frame — two Brighton & Hoves and one Stagecoach. Both companies were brilliant, each phoning back within 45min — B&H with an update, Stagecoach to say it had them. The driver had found them on a lost property sweep before handing over the bus and I was reunited with them in under an hour. Customer service at its best.

I have every sympathy with the Arriva Yorkshire driver who wrote in *You Write*, February. I never suggested drivers should pick up rubbish, except perhaps the odd rolling bottle, but someone should. He clearly feels he has a lot to do already and no one is denying that.

I'm pleased that lost property sweeps continue in all this and particularly grateful to the driver who found my glasses. I still remember fondly the reward left for me by a Brighton student when she collected her files that I had found on a sweep in my conducting days. I did 1,100 tickets that shift and the note she left said that she was amazed that I'd had the time to do anything other than issue tickets and ring the bell. Certainly none to sort out the accumulating litter.

A driver the other morning highlighted another way in which she felt drivers are undervalued. It was January and some outside panelling was filthy. She said that they were parked so close together in the garage that it was impossible to get in them without getting one's uniform filthy — making a mockery of the company signs asking passengers not to bring food and drink on board in the interests of hygiene.

The reality some managers are missing

Is anyone left in the industry, though, who uses the product as a customer? I hear of companies where managers are told they should be in their office analysing figures or always using their car 'to save time' when attending meetings. If they used a bus occasionally, they would know that the figures aren't accurate. For instance, they'd know that many drivers don't push the button on the machine to register sight of a pass.

That is part of that invisible mass of unrecorded bus users to whom Jim Froggatt referred in *You Write*, February. And I hear of others where analysing on-board videos is telling them all sorts of things about passenger behaviour — most of which they'd know if they used the buses or even asked their drivers.

We know many service issues are hard to



Above: Sargeant, Kington VA51 SAR, its Optare Spectra-bodied DAF DB250, waiting to depart from Hereford railway station for Llandrindod Wells in July 2002. MARK BAILEY

sort out, but I can't help feeling that motivation to find solutions would be greater if the providers had some personal stake in them.

Good news from the Marches

But here's some more good news. On 3 March, I made a complicated journey from Queensferry in North Wales to Hereford. Once it was clear that this would be the route, I decided to theme the day by ensuring that every component journey ended in a different country and during the course of the day crossed the Welsh border at least 10 times (more thanks to wobbles in it at Llanymynerch and Knighton).

I am delighted to say that the two small operators and one big group operator involved performed faultlessly with every bus presented well, arriving on time and driven well by a friendly and helpful person. The small companies were Tanat Valley and Sargeant's of Kington; and the big one isn't based in Scotland. The latter also provided two trains, one of which was a few minutes late but it didn't matter. Information and arrangements at interchange points was also faultless, except in Chester where there are three bus nodes (and even three services numbered 1) and Knighton where the bus stand is esoteric and the station a walk away across an international border.

Tanat Valley has signs asking people to keep their feet off the seats (*Service Extra*, January 2004) and intimating that a charge will be made if the seats are soiled. London Underground also displays signs. I'm not certain why other bus companies don't. It's surely an ignorance thing with most of today's youth rather than malice. I mean, they sit on the seats.

While in follow-up mode, I was interested to observe a Stagecoach South Wales crew handover in Brynmawr recently where the departing driver processed the boarders there before handing over to her colleague. It didn't seem to take any longer than those handovers that involve us standing outside waiting to pay the new driver (*Service Extra*, April). Another option, which I saw in Worthing recently (and have seen elsewhere), is to let all the pass holders on before, or during, the changeover.

And further good news is that First's dialogue with writers to *Buses* in pursuit of improved customer service continues and one direct outcome has been a plan for cheap add-on travel for period tickets. More next month.

Anyone photographed a 172?

Thirteen years ago, our esteemed editor wrote an entertaining piece for another magazine about all the incidental knowledge we pick up as bus loonies. It included the immortal line, after a list of the more unlikely municipal operators, that not only would we know where those places were, chances are we'd been there too.

Certainly, I have buses to thank for my lifelong interest in places. I went first to see the buses. Then I went to see the buses and also noted a bit about the places, and eventually I went to see the places and also noted the buses. As regular readers will know, in the past few years I've been checking out some of the places I discovered all those years ago and never revisited. More next column, especially if someone out there has a picture of a 172 (any era, preferably in colour) leaving Aberdare for Porthcawl. If you do, please contact the editor. Many thanks.

BUSES

FIRST RATE SERVICE . . .

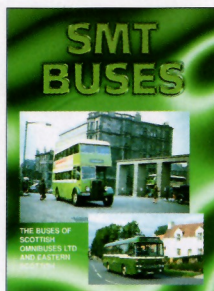
Experienced, efficient, well packaged, with a fast turnaround. Order by post, telephone, e-mail, or via our website.

FIRST CLASS CHOICE . . .

Thousands of titles in stock, including British Railways and Urban transport; Maritime; Aviation & Military; Astronomy and Spaceflight – ask for our free illustrated catalogues.

POPULAR TITLES

AEC Vehicles: Origins to 1929 (Thackray)	£24.95
Birmingham Corporation Transport 1904-1939	£16.99
The Birth of the Routemaster (Aldridge et al)	£14.95
Buses Yearbook 2005	£13.99
Charltonian (Dobson/Battersby)	£4.75
Crossley (Eyre et al)	£35.00
DMS Colour Scene Volume 3 (Eadon/Clarke)	£21.00
Eastern Bus Handbook: Latest edition	£15.25
History of British Bus Services (Hibbs) reprint	£14.99
A History of the British Steam Tram Vol.1 (Gladwin)	£40.00
Lincolnshire Roadcar 75 (Wise)	£19.95



The Little Red Book 2005 (Pattison)	£35.00
London Buses Around Surrey (Hobbs)	£14.99
London Transport in the 1950s (Baker)	£15.99
London Transport in Exile 1950s & 1960s	£14.99
London Transport Since 1933 (Baker)	£19.99
London's DMS Dispersal: Vol 2	£10.95
A Nostalgic Tour of Wolverhampton (Part 3- East)	£15.99
Ribble Motor Services Ltd – Northern Area 1939	£4.50
Routemaster Body Swaps (Prince)	£6.95
Southdown Fleet History: Part.13 1940-1944 (SEC)	£5.00
Southern Vectris 1929-2004 (Newman)	£16.00
St. Helens Trolleybuses (Sandford)	£29.00
SMT Buses (H L Barker)	£22.00
Streets of Glasgow (Millar)	£14.99
TAG Major Operators Fleets N-Z	£12.00
The Southdown Queen Mary's (Osborne)	£22.00
Trent 2 (Banks) Prestige Series	£9.50
United Counties (Banks) Prestige Series	£9.50

DVDs (D) & VIDEOS (V)

Best Ever East Kent Road Car Company Ltd. D/V	£16.00
Blackpool Tram Video Winter 2004/5 D	£16.00
Bus Marque: Bristol VR (60 min) D/V	£16.00
Bus Rides on the Isle of Wight D	£18.00
Bus Spot Accrington D/V	£16.00
Bus Spot Southampton D	£16.00
A Decade of Buses in Cork Filmed 1994 - 2004 D	£16.00
Hustle 'Bustle Hastings D	£16.00
The London Bus (56 min) D/V	£14.95
London Transport 1970s D/V	£16.00
Manchester 2004 part 2 D/V	£16.00
Mumbai – Bombay Buses 2004 (60 min) D	£16.00
Routemaster in London D/V	£19.95
A Tribute to Southdown Queen Marys D	£16.00

IAN ALLAN TRANSPORT BOOKSHOPS

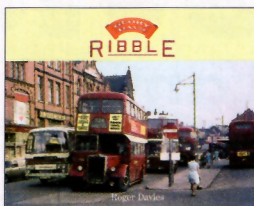
Birmingham Airport	Telephone	0121 781 0921
Birmingham City	Telephone	0121 643 2496
Cardiff	Telephone	029 20390 615
London: Waterloo	Telephone	020 7401 2100
Manchester	Telephone	0161 237 9840

GLORY DAYS: RIBBLE

by R Davies

Examines the history of Ribble from its earliest days through to the 1970s. Draws on the memories of former employees to produce a fascinating portrait of a much mourned operator.

96 pages. Hbk . . .£16.99



GLORY DAYS: EAST KENT

by G Kraemer-Johnson & John Bishop

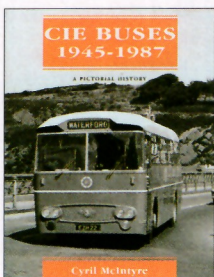
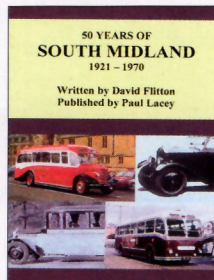
Alongside the authors' well researched text this book includes many colour and b/w illustrations portraying the great variety of vehicles and services over the years. 96pp. Hbk April c£16.99



50 YEARS OF SOUTH MIDLAND 1921-1970

by David Flitton

Detailed history of this Oxford based coaching company. Includes fleet list of all vehicles owned over the life of the company. 140 b/w photos. 192pp Softback£11.00

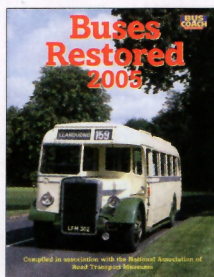
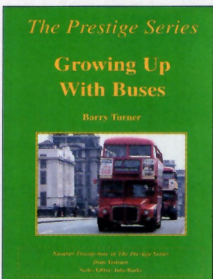


CIE BUSES 1945-1987: A Pictorial History

History of this company, backed up with a super collection of archive photos from locations all over Ireland make this a must for bus enthusiasts. 257 b/w photos. 96 pages. Sbk. £14.99

BUSES RESTORED 2005

Invaluable guide to restored buses and bus museums throughout the British Isles. The 2005 edition has a more comprehensive list of privately preserved vehicles and now has colour photos throughout. 128 pages. Softback£13.99



GROWING UP WITH BUSES

Prestige 29

By Barry Turner
An enthusiast's reminiscences of childhood buses of the 50s and 60s in London and the South East. 105 b/w photos. 64 pages. Softback£9.50

WHEELS AROUND DUBLIN

by Cyril McIntyre

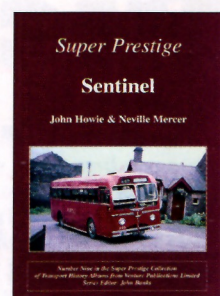
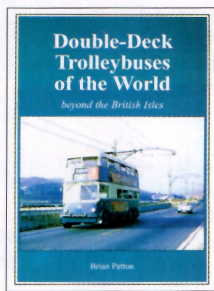
Photo album of wheel transport around Dublin up to the 1960s. Many buses, coaches and trams are featured in period street scenes. 58 b/w photos. 48 pages. Sbk . . .£7.99



SENTINEL:

Super Prestige 9

by Howie and Mercer
The first underfloor bus to be available on the open market. Includes individual vehicle histories and details of all known operators. 160pp. Softback£18.95



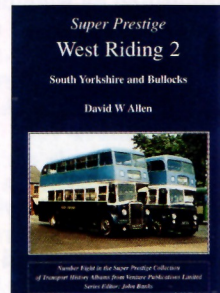
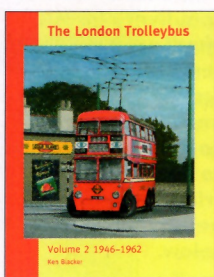
DOUBLE-DECK TROLLEYBUSES OF THE WORLD

Always a rarity outside the UK but the author has tracked down over 800 in locations as diverse as Australia, Malaysia and Germany. 96 pages. Softback£16.00

WEST RIDING 2

Super Prestige 8

by David W Allen
Second volume covering South Yorkshire and Bullocks. Usual Prestige style with many photos and 10 pages of history. 2 route maps. 140 b/w and 32 colour photos. 96 pages. Softback . . .£16.95



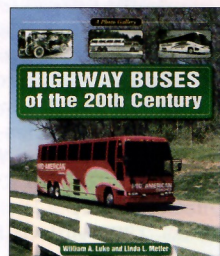
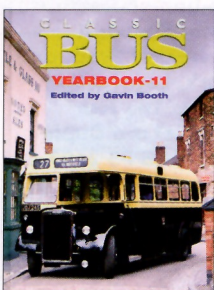
THE LONDON TROLLEYBUS: Vol.2 1946-1962

by K Blacker
Detailed history from the end of WWII to May 1962 packed with information, includes route map. 4 colour, 344 b/w photos. 216 pages. Hbk. £25.00

HIGHWAY BUSES of the 20th CENTURY

by W A Luke & L Metter

New 'Iconografix' photo Gallery with 300 b/w images with insightful captions, of America's intercity, charter, tour and sightseeing bus industry. 160pp. Sbk. . .£19.95



CLASSIC BUS YEARBOOK 11

by G Booth
The eagerly awaited annual publication covering the days of the British bus from the past. Packed with photos and information. Colour & b/w photos throughout. Hardback£16.99

POST & PACKING

UK Mainland: Add 10% (min £2.50; max £5). Over £75 post free.
OVERSEAS: Add 15% (min £4.50); 10% for £150+ orders.
PAYMENT: Visa/Mastercard/Eurocard/Connect/Switch and Solo charge cards; Post Giro 450 6154; Sterling cheque, drawn on a UK bank; US Dollar check (no surcharge); IMO; British Postal Orders. Orders are sent surface mail, but air mail despatch by arrangement.
Certain items may be due for release after this advert has gone to press. If you wish to check availability, our full-time staff will be pleased to deal with enquiries, reservations, phone or mail orders. We will advise you of any undue delay, but please allow 28 days for UK delivery, longer for overseas. Titles offered in this advert are subject to their continuing availability and any price change.

Order via post, fax, 'phone or e-mail from:

Buses Mail Order[†] [BU]

4 Watling Drive, Hinckley, Leics, LE10 3EY

Tel: 01455 254 450 Fax: 01455 233 737

E-mail: midlandbooks@compuserve.com

Internet: www.midlandcountiessuperstore.com



Credit Card Orders welcome any time, day or night



† Midland Counties Publications is a division of Ian Allan Publishing Ltd - Company No.400981

Picturereview

Lerwick Lament

SANDY MACDONALD has selected these photographs taken in Lerwick, the Shetland Islands' capital, as his tribute to the late Gordon Jamieson, the operator, enthusiast and historian who died in April. Shortly before his health finally failed, Gordon offered to help Sandy put together a feature for his Century of Scotland's Omnibuses series. Some of these pictures also appear in Gordon's *Shetland Buses in the 20th Century*, published in 2000.

Top right: SK 2862 started life with the Royal Hotel, Thurso in 1944 as a standard Duple-bodied Bedford OWB utility bus, but it was rebuilt substantially after acquisition by Highland Transport in 1946. It later moved north to Shetland and was owned by J. S. Moncrieff of Spiggie from 1956 until the company sold its service in 1962. It also appears in the bottom picture. **PHOTOBUS**

Centre right: William Thomson of Sandwick in the South Mainland used a distinctive tan and cream livery for his fleet, which provided the 'Lerwick-Sandwick Passenger Service' until 1962 when it merged with Smith, Sandwick to form the Sandwick Transport Company. 1955 Duple Super Vega-bodied Bedford SBG BSY 929 — new to Midlothian operator Allan, Gorebridge — was the last vehicle acquired before the merger. It also is in the picture below. **PHOTOBUS**

Below: This picture of the old two-level Lerwick bus park, showing eight vehicles of seven different operators, appeared on the title page of Gordon Jamieson's book. Left-to-right at the lower level are Federated Industries-bodied Austin K2SL PS 1788 of Isbister, Walls; Duple Vega-bodied Bedford SB KWX 440 of Peterson, Ollaberry; Duple Vista-bodied Bedford OB SS 7237 with its final Shetland operator, Johnson Brothers of Brae; and OB SMY 140 of Garriock, Lerwick with 'economy' style SMT body. The four Bedfords in the upper level are Duple-bodied SBG BSY 929 and SB PS 2107 of Sandwick Transport; rebuilt SK 2862 (the bus illustrated in the top picture) after it passed to Eunson, Virkie in 1962; and Plaxton-bodied forward control OB BCB 96 of Leslie, Virkie. **PHOTOBUS**





Left: John Leask & Son has been in business since 1919 and remains one of the islands' principal operators. A notable member of its fleet from 1966 until it was scrapped in 1980 was SSA 550, a Harrington Cavalier-bodied AEC Reliance new in 1960 to Aberdeen coach operator McIntyre, Bucksburn.
PHOTOBUS



Centre left: This May 1994 view shows 1980 Plaxton Supreme IV-bodied Volvo B58-56 MPS 666V of Shalder Coaches about to take its passengers on board in the Viking bus station, which opened in 1991. This vehicle survived to be transferred to Rapson's Coaches when the Shalder business was sold in 1999.
SANDY MACDONALD



Below: This June 2002 view shows Plaxton Beaver 2-bodied Mercedes-Benz Vario O814D SV51 HBK supplied new to White's Coaches of Bridge of Walls, one of the islands' newer operators.
GLEN SIMPSON

Protect Your Collection... ...Organise your Prints

Arrowfile - Looking after what you cannot replace

- Ideal for
- Traditional •
 - Inkjet •
 - Digital •



Size: 338mm H x 263mm W x 85mm D. Capacity: up to 70 Refill Pages

arrowfile Looking after what you treasure

Do you, like some people stuff your prints back in the envelope or save them on your computer, and then, like in a time capsule leave them unseen for decades? If you know that electronic devices are prone to damage then you understand that your digital images are at risk too. Protect your photos before they fade away:

Arrowfile Albums are flexible, protective and forgiving (essential attribute for the Digital Age): Easy to Organise, Use and Maintain, even for people without a flair for album keeping.

- Never again say 'this will not fit in my album'
- Take advantage of continuity of style – just add a matching album
- You won't ever be ripping up yellowed photos with Arrowfile Acid-free Archival pages
- Protect your CDs from 'CD-Rot'
- Reclaim your precious space. Store up to 560 prints in just 3.5 inches of shelf space

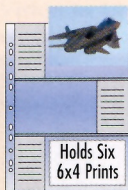


10 pages (1 pack) for only £2.99
Choose your Arrowfile Crystal Clear Refill Sleeve Pages from below

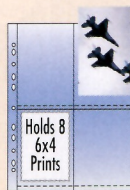


RA8615C*

*Suitable for APS Prints



RA8115C*



RA8315C*



RA8340C



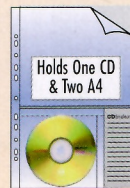
RA9790C



RA7589C



RA1520C



RA1425C



RA1410C



RA6001

Memo Title Inserts are optional at £1.99 per pack (ask operator for details)

www.arrowfile.com

Also go to www.arrowfilephotos.com
For Online Digital Photo Services

Real photos and personalised gifts from your digital camera by UK's award-winning online laboratory. Same day dispatch service



**SAVE
UP TO
£39.90**

F600 Dark Brown £19.95

Order refill pages for £12 or more
and claim this leather album

FREE

Even better
order refill pages for £20 or more and
Claim TWO albums FREE
(only £2.99 for 10 refill pages)

This special offer can only be ordered by phone, fax or post
(we can only afford to offer this promotion one per household)



FREEPHONE CREDIT CARD ORDER HOTLINE:

0800 027 5363

For overseas orders please ring +44(0)2380 248707

or post to Arrowfile, **FREEPOST LON12541**, PO Box 88, Southampton SO14 0UA

PRODUCT CODE	PRODUCT DESCRIPTION	ITEM PRICE	QTY	TOTAL
RA8115C	EXAMPLE 6x4" EXAMPLE	£2.99	2	\$5.98

Postage & Packing UK

As ParcelForce delivery charges

to locations in the Channel

Islands, Scottish Isles & Highlands and Isle of Man are up

to £13, we reluctantly ask you for only £5 on top of our

delivery charge of £2.95 (totaling £7.95 for orders under £49;

£5 for orders over £49 and FREE for orders over £59).

Standard... £4.95 £2.95

My order is over £49... FREE P&P

TOTAL

- ☐ My order is over £12, and I claim one Leather Album **FREE**
☐ My order is over £20, and I claim two Leather Albums **FREE**

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms

Address

Postcode

Tel:

Date

Email:

☐ I enclose a cheque payable to **Arrowfile** for £

OR please debit my ☐ Mastercard ☐ Visa ☐ Maestro

No:

Expiry date Maestro issue no.

Signature

ONE MONTH MONEY BACK GUARANTEE
If for any reason you aren't happy with your purchase,
send it back within 1 full month for a 100% refund.
This does not affect your statutory rights.

TO CLAIM THIS SPECIAL OFFER, QUOTE: **A10605**

Flash Foto Ltd T/A Arrowfile, 10 The Broadway, London NW7 3LL. Reg No: 1561035

Photocopied form accepted

The Fenton File

MIKE FENTON describes one of the few Leyland Olympians with open-top Northern Counties bodywork

Stagecoach North West operates a small fleet of green and cream open-top double-deckers in the Lake District, where they pass through some of the finest and — unfortunately — wettest scenery in Britain on their way between Bowness and Grasmere.

A few years ago, I sampled the company's other open-top service that runs for seven miles from Keswick alongside Derwent Water and through Borrowdale to the village of Seatoller. The usual performer then was 2017 (B117 TVU), a Northern Counties-bodied Leyland Olympian ONLXB/1R new to Greater Manchester Transport in 1985. It became a Stagecoach vehicle when the group acquired GM Buses South in 1996; in 1999, it became an open-topper by the time-honoured method of being driven under a (too) low bridge.

I saw it only once in topless form and photographed it at

the Seatoller terminus on the final weekend of the 2001 season when the Lake District was its normal climatic self — cool, cloudy and with an ever-present threat of rain.

Unlike many open-toppers, it was not destined for a long life and is recorded as withdrawn and scrapped in 2003. Although there have been many open-top Leyland Olympians, examples with Northern Counties bodywork are comparatively rare, although remarkably this number includes a handful that ran on Sentosa island, Singapore.



OOC July - December 2005

Bova Futura, Kings, Colchester	£19.25
Dart SLF & E. Lanes Lolyne, Metrobus	£40.00
Dennis Dart SLF, Scottish Citylink	£19.25
East Lanes, Vyking, Lincolnshire Road Car	£21.25
East Lanes, Vyking, Bus Eireann/Cork City Council	£21.25
Leyland PD2 MCW Orion, Exeter	£19.25
Optare Solo, Burton	£19.25
Optare Solo, Strathay	£19.25
AEC/Plaxton Panorama, Barton	£19.25



NEW Van Hool T9, National Express	£21.25
NEW Volvo Van Hool T9, Shearings	£21.25
Wright Eclipse Fusion, Dublin Bus	£29.25
Wright Eclipse Gemini, Yorkshire Coastliner	£21.25
Wright Eclipse Gemini, First London	£21.25
Wright Eclipse Gemini, Travel Dundee	£21.25

1:50 Corgi Due July - December



Daimler CWA6, Aberdeen Corporation	£44.50
AEC Routemaster RM1279, London Transport	£44.50
Bedford VAL, North Norfolk Coach Hire	£41.50

Model Buses from TRANSMAC

www.transmac.net

CREATIVE MASTER NORTHCORD

Alexander RX Olympian, Megabus.com in & out of London	£24.95
President o/top, City Sightseeing Cambridge	£19.95
ALX 400, Stagecoach East Kent	£24.95
ALX 400, London United 'Back the Bid' advert	£24.95
Dennis Dart MPD, East Yorkshire	£20.00
Dennis Dart MPD (Twin Pack), Arriva	£29.95
Alexander 'R' Royale, Lothian (P268 PSX)	£24.95
Alexander 'R' Royale, Yorkshire Coastliner	£24.95
Alexander 'R' Royale/Olympian, AirBus	£tba
Alexander 'R' Royale/Olympian, First Bus	£tba
Alexander 'R' Royale/Olympian, National Express	£tba
MB Citaro 2 axle, First London (route RV1)	£25.00
Citaro artic, Demonstrator (London route 436)	£29.00
MB Citaro artic, Stagecoach London (route 25)	£29.00
MB Citaro, First Slough - Heathrow	£tba

BRITBUS



AEC Swift single door, Malta	£27.95
AEC Swift (SMS), London Red with adverts	£27.95
Guy Arab III (Long bonnet), Southampton	£32.95
Guy Arab III, Grahams of Paisley	£32.95
Guy Arab III (Long bonnet), Provincial	£32.95
Scania Metropolitan, Trathens	£31.00



Exclusive First Editions

60th Anniversary of VE Day
(due May-June)



AEC Regal 10T10, London (WWII)	£19.25
AEC Regal 10T10, American Red Cross	£19.25
Daimler utility, London (WWII)	£17.50
Guy Arab II utility, London (WWII)	£17.50
AEC STL, London (WWII)	£17.50
Guy Arab II utility, Southdown (WWII)	£17.50
Daimler Utility, Birmingham City (WWII)	£17.50
Leyland TD 1 closed, Plymouth City (WWII)	£17.50

Forthcoming Releases

Harrington Grenadier, North Western	£17.50
Leyland National MkI long, Brighton & Hove	£17.50
Plaxton Pointer Dart, Western National	£17.50
Mercedes Minibus, South Wales Transport	£17.50
AEC MkIII flatbed & trailer, BRS	£17.50

TRANSMAC

Dept B, PO Box 124, Leeds LS26 0WJ. Tel/Fax: 0113 282 5349

e-mail: busmodels@transmac.net



Dates are manufacturers plan. Models will be dispatched as soon as stock arrives. Prices include postage, Air Mail at cost.

Models can be insured against loss/damage in transit (UK only) - please add £1 per item for this service



Reviews

BOOKS

CLASSIC BUS YEARBOOK-11

Edited by GAVIN BOOTH, IAN ALLAN PUBLISHING, ISBN 0 7110 3055 3, 235MM x 170MM, 128pp, HARDBACK, £14.99

I'm never sure if *Classic Bus Yearbook* is meant to look retro, or if it's design hasn't kept up with the times. As always, this book's appeal depends very much on whether the contents ring your bell.

Parts of this one — another good mix of entertainment and education — rang mine, not least on opening it and being confronted with a fine picture of a Manchester PD2 roaring round a steep corner in Greenfield, to which to my eye the graininess adds hugely in atmospheric terms. It illustrates an article by David Wayman. While the objective part of my nature doesn't like his way of accompanying a village idiot along a bus route and explaining everything to him as he goes along, my wife and son might think otherwise. They tiptoed out of the room unnoticed, no doubt shaking their heads sadly, as I fell into one of those little nostalgic reveries that occasionally make us wish that the Dennis Dart — or Leyland National — had never been conceived.

I felt very old when gazing in awe at two splendid pictures of North Western Dennis Lolines, thinking how these were the cutting edge of modernity. I asked my son whether they looked modern to him and you can guess the answer. It's this sort of nostalgia that makes *Classic Bus Yearbook* worth its £14.99, and as Routemaster coaches are also guaranteed to ring my bell, David Thrower's article on that subject was a bonus.

Editor Gavin Booth's inclusion of Metrobuses and their ilk should help ring younger bells. Roger Davies again had me in hysterics (it was the Tiger Cub and the alarm clock that did it this

year) and again I struggled to follow Robert Jowitt's thread, until I realised that you're not really supposed to and just enjoyed it anyway. He's good at reminding us there's more to life than buses, within a bus-filled context.

If you want something more historic that will add to your body of knowledge, Alan Townsin gives a fascinating treatise on short-bonneted buses, designed to cram as many passengers in as possible in the days before deep-vein thrombosis was invented. And Geoff Burrows gets to the bottom of some strange exchanges that went on in the North East during the World War 2. Other features cover the recent outbreak of RTs in London and bodywork by Brighton, Hove & District, while regulars include Chris Drew's drawings (here are some drawings what I Drew?) and Alan Millar's *Classic Wonderbus* (the Alexander M-type) and Checkpoint reminding us of NBC's plans for a Marylebone busway.

THE 2005 STAGECOACH BUS HANDBOOK

Edited by DAVID DONATI, STUART MARTIN & BILL POTTER, BRITISH BUS PUBLISHING, ISBN 1 904875 05 X, 210MM x 147MM, 192pp, SOFTBACK, £16.25

The yearly renewal of BBP's big group books is as useful

as it is welcome, especially if you're in my line of business. Not only has the format and standard been maintained, but the book size and price have been held for a third year in succession.

Publication of this — and of other BBP Handbooks in preparation — was delayed while the

editors gathered details of the buses lost in the Carlisle flooding. Those lost vehicles are listed, as are such stored vehicles as the last ex-East London Routemasters. Besides a full UK listing by fleetnumber with depot codes, depot allocations and the essential 'find me' alphabetical registration index at the back, there also are the usual listings of the fleets of Sheffield Supertram, Stagecoach New Zealand and the companies (but not the vehicles) of Coach USA and Coach Canada.

Colour illustrations are good quality throughout and up-to-date. Several non-corporate liveries are shown, including the King Alfred Dennis Dart and Midland Red Volvo B10M-55.

GLORY DAYS RIBBLE & EAST KENT

ROGER DAVIES (Ribble), GLYN KRAEMER-JOHNSON & JOHN BISHOP (East Kent), IAN ALLAN PUBLISHING, ISBN 0 7110 then 3038 3 (Ribble) or 3030 8 (East Kent), 190MM x 245MM, 112pp (Ribble) 96pp (East Kent) HARDBACK, £16.99

These two volumes on former BET, later National Bus Company subsidiaries are object lessons in how you can tackle the same sort of subject in quite different ways. All three authors are enthusiasts with an interest in history, but Roger Davies also is a senior busman who knows something of the inside story at Ribble.

That additional perspective makes this a story above all about the people who made Ribble the company it was, and not just a story of the buses it bought and the routes they ran — which are all there, too. It's a story in which he has drawn on personal recollections of former employees and on liberally quoted extracts from the staff magazine. Material such as this helps bring together a far more rounded tale

of what life was like in the different eras through which Ribble prospered as the dominant bus company serving Lancashire and Westmorland.

There are insights into the strict military discipline that its founders, Major Hickmott and Captain Betteridge, brought to civilian life post-World War 1, as well as a hint of less disciplined private lives, for the Major and Captain apparently exchanged wives. Roger Davies is an unashamed believer in local bus companies with local identities and in this book he advances a good case for his cause with accounts of the great family-like pride that Ribble people had in their company. And of a company that believed it was in its own interest to identify with and support the Lancashire textile industry upon which it depended for so many of its passengers.

The East Kent book is written much more from the perspective of admiring outsiders, although it still acknowledges the human contribution that went into the business. The authors pay particular tribute to the efforts and sacrifices made by staff during World War 2 when its buses were in the firing line of cross-Channel battles.

Like Ribble, East Kent often bought vehicles to its own distinctive designs and, indeed, both bought full-front double-deckers in the late-1950s. As the book explains, there also were pre-war coaches with extra-tall roofs to accommodate the musical instruments of military bands, principally the Royal Marines School of Music at Deal.

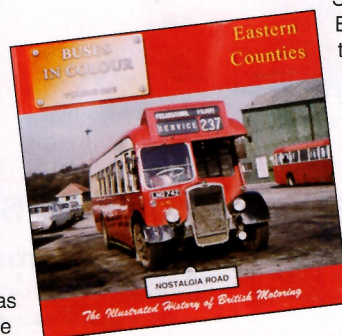
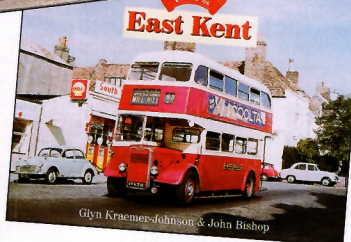
Read also one of the most memorable descriptions of a Commer TS3 two-stroke engine — 'a throaty roar accompanied by a rasping exhaust, which together sounded rather like a bucketful of wasps'.

BUSES IN COLOUR: EASTERN COUNTIES

MALCOLM GEE, NOSTALGIA ROAD PUBLICATIONS, ISBN 1 903016 51 7, 200MM x 208MM, 52pp, SOFTBACK, £9.95

This first in a series of modestly priced colour picture albums from an associate of Trans-Pennine Publishing focuses on the Norfolk and Suffolk operations of Eastern Counties in the 1960s and 1970s.

Malcolm Gee is primarily a railway enthusiast who turned his photographic interest to buses as the Beeching cuts saw them replace trains on



many branch lines across East Anglia. Some of the pictures aren't the sharpest you could find, nor is the caption information particularly extensive, although it does appear to be accurate. But these may well be the only colour pictures taken of many of the buses in many of the locations and they help bring back memories of rural buses — ECW-bodied Bristols mainly, also Bedfords, an Albion and Leyland Nationals — in country lanes and vanished bus stations.

WEST RIDING 2

DAVID W. ALLEN, VENTURE PUBLICATIONS, ISBN 1 898432 40 6, 235MM x 168MM, 96pp, SOFTBACK, £16.95

This latest of Venture's Super Prestige series follows the author's earlier volume on the West Riding Automobile Company. It is devoted to two related companies that ultimately passed into West Riding ownership, South Yorkshire and Bullock's.

South Yorkshire Motors — South Yorkshire Road Transport in its latter years — was the longer lived of the two, lasting from 1926 to 1998 and was owned by the Bullock family from 1929 to 1994, when Caldaire (West Riding's then owner) took over. Bullock's — B&S Motor Services — ran buses from 1914 and had 170 when it sold out to West Riding in 1950.

The family's involvement in the South Yorkshire company is clearly the stuff of period dramas. It arose through the friction that built up between the strong-willed Bullock brothers running B&S. Ernest Bullock left to buy South Yorkshire, his brothers Jim and Abe reconstituting B&S. As the book explains, one of Ernest's strong convictions was his preference for Albions, which South Yorkshire bought until the Leyland takeover turned the company to Titans and Atlanteans. His brothers ran a mixed fleet of Leylands, AECs and Daimlers mainly.

There is a mix of black and white and colour pictures. Bullock's disappeared too early for many of its red buses to be captured in colour, but one prized 1952 C. Carter picture of a Regent III graces the back cover, while the colour section includes several in West Riding green.

LONDON TRANSPORT IN COLOUR 1950-1969

KEVIN McCORMACK, IAN ALLAN PUBLISHING, ISBN 0 7110 3073 1 190MM x 245MM, 80pp, HARDBACK, £14.99

Never judge a book by its cover, for if you did and your soul didn't extend to the ex-Metropolitan Railway electric locomotive on the front of this title, then you might miss the fact that it's about buses, trolleybuses and trams as well as some incredible old Underground trains.

This is a potpourri of certain aspects of LT over the 20 years that it covers. The motorbus pictures are mainly of red buses operating for LT's Country Area or are on routes straying into green bus territory, while the trolleybuses are largely in East London.

Most of the trolleybus shots are examples of the masterful work of Phil Tatt, who combined technical expertise with an eye for excellent compositions. Two of these merit special mention.

June 2005

An SA2 in High Street, Barking side on a Sunday morning amid independent shops and trustingly parked bicycles. You can feel its very silence. And a truly stunning view of an E1 alongside the railway in North Woolwich, with a bomb site, Victorian housing and towering dockside cranes adding to the atmosphere. These pictures alone are worth the cover price.



GROWING UP WITH BUSES

BARRY TURNER, VENTURE PUBLICATIONS, ISBN 1 898432 47 3, 235MM x 168MM, 64pp, SOFTBACK, £9.50

There is a running debate in transport publishing circles about the appeal — or lack of it — of autobiographical books by enthusiasts. However, Barry Turner's memoirs of discovering buses, trolleybuses and trams, and exploring London in them throughout the 1950s, deserves to succeed.

Most of us — regardless of the decade in which we first developed our obsession with the subject — will recognise the unfolding knowledge that came Barry Turner's way as he, his parents and a doting grandfather travelled ever farther afield of his home in Clapham. He makes the formula work because he also brings in chunks of social history, like the fact that his grandfather lived with the family after his grandmother was killed in the blitz. There are accounts of seaside holidays and of coach trips to see the now lost tradition of hop farming in Kent.

If, like me, you knew some of the south London suburbs in more recent decades, you might also enjoy the insights into the varied buses serving the likes of Sutton, Cheam and Belmont in the age before the RT, Routemaster and RF reigned supreme.

LONDON BUSES IN 2004

Edited by TONY WILSON & MALCOLM YOUNG, LONDON OMNIBUS TRACTION SOCIETY, No ISBN number, 235MM x 172MM, 64pp, SOFTBACK, £6.00

Here are a few statistics for you. Around 900 new buses were delivered to London red bus operators last year; the peak vehicle requirement in the UK capital rose by 44 to 6,918, of which 18.84% (1,303) came from Arriva fleets. How do I know? Because LOTS, rapid



chronicler of most bus things London, includes these and much more in its all-colour annual review.

As ever, this is a most thorough production, with chronological lists of events followed by even more detail under the individual operators' headings. Appendices list the tendered services that changed hands, those that stayed put and the buses added to or withdrawn from each fleet. As if these words alone were not enough, the pictures are excellent in quality and depth of coverage.

Books reviewed by STEPHEN MORRIS (Classic Bus Yearbook), JOHN G. LIDSTONE (Stagecoach Handbook) and ALAN MILLAR

1/76TH DIECAST MODELS EXCLUSIVE FIRST EDITIONS LONDON TRANSPORT GUY SPECIAL/ECW GS59

Guide price £16.99

One really good thing about EFE is that it consistently gets shape and overall feel right. So, I expected a GS and I've now got a nice little model of GS59, just as it should be. This may explain why, apparently, the first releases flew out of the model shops almost as soon as they arrived.

As ever, it's a no-frills product, without rearview mirrors and with a plain brown interior. Authentic looking window vents are raised on glazing and printed. The destination displays, legal lettering and fleetnames are in the correct fonts, but the garage code and running numbers aren't. Panel detailing is excellent, but I was disappointed that the front foglamp and rear reflectors are represented just by silver and red blobs. The all-important front end shape is captured excellently, although on my model, the bumper droops a touch downwards at the nearside.



BRITBUS - LONDON TRANSPORT AEC SWIFT SMS52 Guide price £28

Unlike some of Britbus's earlier releases, this first in a series of red and green SM-class Swifts is pleasingly accurate for such an expensive model.

Overall shape, finish and detailing — including wheel rings, coin-in-the-slot symbols and a moulded rather than printed grille — are good, although the destination display is too small. Rear lamps are painted blobs and not lenses. I could imagine lifting the engine flap to reveal the AH505 engine (just as many did when in service) but alas, you cannot. You can remove it, but it doesn't reveal an engine. All you would need then would be a seat cushion to lean against the back.



Models reviewed by JOHN G. LIDSTONE

YOU WRITE

To BUSES, PO Box 3759

Glasgow G41 5YN or

Fax 0141 427 9594 or

e-mail alan@millar1.demon.co.uk

(Please quote full postal address

if communicating by e-mail)

Inconsiderate towards drivers and bus companies?

As an insider working in the industry as a driver, driver trainer and currently in administration, I feel a few of the correspondents in April *Buses* demonstrate either a lack of consideration for the issues facing the industry in general or of drivers in particular.

I don't work for First, so have no particular empathy for it, but Neil Gow and Brian Patton demonstrate some lack of appreciation of the problem industry managers face in dealing with customer complaints. Sadly, some complainants are time wasters and liars (yes, really). While I hope nobody condones a lack of customer care, the only real course of action open to those responding to complaints is to check the ticket machines. In my experience, these are spot-on as they update daily, unlike customer watches or bus station and railway station clocks. To be writing letters of complaint on both 30 November and 1 December indicates a tendency to be a bit of a recurrent complainant. Such people do tend to be suspected of crying wolf in most walks of life and possibly, thus, not taken seriously. I wonder how many letters Brian Patton has written previously, and therefore how much the respondent read the name and thought 'here we go again'...

A point Brian Patton and Bryan Frost note is lack of driver training. Sadly, this is endemic in an industry trying to cope with greater turnover and difficulty in recruiting staff. And I suggest the lack of reply to Brian Patton, while inexcusable, is probably because there is nothing to say apart from to admit this fact, something he seems to realise as he states he doesn't expect a reply.

Similarly, to issue maps and route notes to drivers (as suggested by Bryan Frost) immediately says 'we don't train drivers properly' and could also create problems should a driver have an accident while looking at them. Of course, training drivers properly may equip them to cope with the industry better — as most companies argue that money isn't the main motivator. But such an argument seems to fall on deaf ears, as I made it many times to my current employer but still see drivers rushed through and then fall over and leave a few weeks later, something that seems all too common in the industry today.

In Service Extra, I raised my eyebrows that Julian Osborne, who is given a page in such a magazine, demonstrates ignorance of the situation drivers find themselves in when taking over a bus. He criticises the driver taking over the bus then closing the doors, although that driver goes on to be civil.

Has Julian tried checking his bus, sorting his cash (there are security issues here), loading his Wayfarer (or other electronic machine), checking his running board — basically getting himself sorted — after opening the doors? While a few customers will say 'I'll let you get ready driver', most expect the driver to be instantly ready to issue their tickets and give them change. I find the majority huff and puff if I let them on while

organising myself and demonstrate extreme impatience and lack of understanding of the steps a driver needs to undertake before the start of the journey.

Like the driver Julian mentions, I would let them on if they were getting wet, but then have to tell most customers to 'please take a seat, I'll be with you shortly', yet still find some impatiently thrusting tickets or money at me. Bus driving is stressful enough without this. Julian should think before writing such churlish comments that lack an appreciation of the most basic issues facing a bus driver.

Julian does raise a valid issue, though, of drivers not keeping customers informed. It is amazing how a bus full of disgruntled customers, who have waited half an hour for a 10min frequency service, are transformed when they are addressed (as one leaves the stop), given an apology and brief explanation. Many times I have had those who boarded with faces of thunder leave with a smile and a thank you. It takes little to do but, done properly, can have amazing results.

Dominic Eaton
Shrewsbury

Dual doors and rattling buses

The pages of last month's *Buses* have prompted a set of connected thoughts that may focus readers' attention on the matter of who really has an interest in the qualities of the humble service bus.

Andrew Braddock's Inside Track piece, with its side-swipe at the idiocy of Irish union activities, prompts me to question the decision by Lothian Buses to convert its dual door Dennis Trident and Volvo B7TL double-deckers to single door. I recall that Neil Renilson, the chief executive, reported how the dual-door buses saved significantly on loading times because of the absence of conflicting passenger flows.

My own experience in Edinburgh would certainly be in agreement with that view. I know that safety issues are raised about multi-door buses, but as far as I can establish there is no evidence of any significant problem in Edinburgh, London or in many European cities. As buses now cater for large complements of passengers, I would have thought attention to fastest loading and setting down times were of some importance in the matter of customer service.

Now let me take customer service a bit farther. Several contributions to You Write raise issues that seek to show how bus manufacturers and operators are falling down in their attention to the needs of the bus user. Taking the letters in no particular order of significance, we have D. Smith telling us of his problem with an Arriva driver being unable to provide change for a £5 note offered for a fare of £2.60. He asks, rightly, why garage management seems to find it difficult to provide drivers with a sensible float when a bus is entering service.

Let us move on to 'Rattling good buses', from David Pennlington. I have considered this matter for some years and I cannot understand why, in this age of technology, British manufacturers find it difficult to match the quality of construction regularly found in Germany or France.

If fittings rattle, it is simply because they are not mounted properly. Yes, a bus is bound to generate a variety of vibrations and the situation is worsened if there is a possibility of harmonics

being generated. It is, however, the task of the body designer to take into account these factors, thereby ensuring that the mountings and fixings of various components are such that the effect of the vibrations is dampened out. A recent experience with a Wright-bodied Scania of First Glasgow, at less than two weeks into service, indicated a totally unacceptable level of rattling.

Finally let me move to the item from David Wayman, 'The best engine ever?' This was praise of the Gardner 5LW in comparison with the Leyland O.600, referred to in March *Buses*. I have no doubt that Mr Wayman is correct in his statistics and, on the face of it, the Gardner might be judged the winner. But has he ever travelled on a Bristol K5G or L5G?

While chief engineers of operating companies might have eulogised over the frugality of fuel consumption, I doubt if they ever rode in the wretched buses. The vibration and noise generated by the 5LW made a journey on one of those bone-shakers seem less attractive than travelling by cattle truck. From the ordinary passenger's point of view, this was a disaster. Had the travelling public had the choice at the time between a K5G or a private car, there would have been no contest.

In summary, we have to remember that however enthusiastic we bus buffs are about buses, their attraction to the ordinary traveller will be unaffected by such considerations as liveries, style or make of vehicle. Most bus users do not share our values, particularly those influenced by nostalgia. What matters to the customers are more mundane things such as frequency, reliability, courtesy and comfort.

Neil MacDonald
Walton-on-the-Hill, Stafford

Lounge seating

In your article on the Wright StreetCar (*Buses* May), which you compare with the Irisbus Civas, I see that the design makes extensive use of lounge seating.

In my 'home' town of Lyons, the comparable Irisbus articulated trolleybuses were delivered with that arrangement at the rear. However, the most recent batch has gone back to a 'classic' seating arrangement. My understanding is that the semi-circular seating is unpopular because it brings passengers' knees together so that of three seats available, only one or at best two are occupied. And the corner seat is the last to be used particularly if you happen to be over 6ft tall.

Is lounge seating a plus or minus for operators?

Clive D'Eath
Beausoleil, France

Let's not eat

Half term was approaching. Where might we go? Gibraltar? Yes, let's try it.

What did we find? New bright blue Dennis buses. Easy entry for wheelchairs and buggies. Clear fare signs — OAPs 60p all day, children £1 all day. Ticket machines well placed. Into the bus and there is a single seat at the front — ideal for grandson — unless someone else wants it. Space created for a wheelchair or two buggies.

On taking our seats, we notice how clear the floor is of empty drink cans and bottles, and there is no fast food packaging littering the floor. Then we see the notice that forbids eating and drinking on the bus. Why cannot our buses have similar notices and be as clean?

Raymond L. Lines
Crowborough, East Sussex

An irritating bar

Terry Kirby (You Write, February) asks if designers ever ride in real buses. The picture of an ALX400-bodied Trident alongside his letter may answer the question. No problem for a child, but many adults must be irritated by having to peer over or under the handrail fitted at eye level across the upstairs front windows.

A. Pattison
Birmingham

Setting poor standards

I am sure that I cannot be alone in deploring two trends that are captured in the picture of the Oxford Bus Company Mercedes-Benz Citaro on p24 of last month's *Buses*.

The first is the tendency often to use a lower case letter rather than a capital for the initial letter of a proper noun. The second is to join two nouns to form one, with neither a space nor a hyphen separating them. Both trends are illustrated by the name 'abingdonoxford' on the bus in question.

Present day advertising and titling clearly show that these fashions are popular in graphic art. Television is a strongly influential medium and channel Five, I consider, is among the notable offenders. Electronic communication habits, however, may well have made a further significant contribution to the development.

My concern is that these trends may have a detrimental effect on child literacy, but can any *Buses* reader working professionally in education bear this out? I believe it to be incumbent upon all organisations that communicate in writing, even if only by the displaying of a name, to act responsibly.

David Wayman
Chadderton, Oldham

Articulated double-deckers

Further to Howard Piltz's letter last month, the Setra articulated double-decker he mentions was the one-off SG221HDS. Berkhof built three — one Excellence 2000HDA and two

3000HDAs. The biggest double-deck artic was the Neoplan N138/4 JumboCruiser, capable of carrying up to 144 seated passengers, of which around 10 were built between 1975 and 1986 with the engine at the rear of the front section. A further example was built to special order in 1992 as a pusher artic.

Stephen Osman
Middlesbrough

April Fools and bus anoraks

Bah humbug to J. S. Lewis of Liverpool (You Write last month). Messrs Millar, Booth and others provide us with attractively produced magazines containing well informed material to a high standard of literacy, leavened from time to time by subtle and sometimes not so subtle humour.

The archetype 'anorak' has no interest or conversation beyond bus numbers, route numbers and gripes about his local operator. Fortunately most well-rounded bus enthusiasts can see beyond the numbers and have an ability to enjoy all aspects of life, including having a bit of fun on 1 April.

Iain MacGregor
Bishopton, Renfrewshire

In any hobby, there are in the main two kinds of enthusiast. The first and greater number consists of ordinary people of both genders who enjoy their pursuits and place them alongside their other normal activities with work, family and friends.

The second, and fortunately lesser number, consists of those who are totally obsessed with their chosen pastime to the extent that they seldom achieve a fully rounded life. It goes without saying that this second group is usually unable to grasp any understanding of humour, or indeed many of the finer sensibilities.

Scrooge would probably have approved of their lack of appreciation of April Fools activities.

Geoff. Burrows
Lee-on-the-Solent

I had to write about the letter from John S. Lewis last month expressing his displeasure about the

April Fool spoofs in the edition before that. I must say I am a little surprised that someone wrote in to say it was childish, saying 'With such childishness, it's little wonder that people who are not into our hobby treat us as "anoraks" when so many bus enthusiasts portray that sort of image'. I think if people just lightened up, then people would not treat us as anoraks.

Anyway, life can be dull and boring and it's way too short at the best of times. It's good when there is light relief. If people do not like what was written for the April Fool — after all its only one page out of 840 (all editions added together over a year), then there are other magazines (and maybe a sense of humour) to buy.

On the other hand, I found it a great page and it really made my day. Can we have more (please pardon the pun, I did not mean to refer to the article again, i.e. the green Wilts & Dorset 'More' buses) spoofs please next year?

Shaun Kerr
Bournemouth

Subjective or objective?

Without wishing to ignite these fires even farther (You Write, February and March), I feel that I should pass comment, given that I operated the vehicles involved in a previous life.

The Volvo B6 was not Volvo's best offering to the market and I don't believe the Pointer was Plaxton's. However, the greatest contributor to the current condition of these vehicles was, and still is, the condition of the road surfaces around the various estates in Darlington.

It is unfair, though, of John Lidstone to single out Town & Country simply because he has had experience of the vehicles. There are six other vehicles from this batch, all in similar condition, and the current operator of these six will probably be glad not to be associated with these comments.

As a result, I believe that Mr Lidstone should keep his Fleet News spot as an objective report, rather than include possibly offensive subjective comment, and in this respect I agree with Mr Waters's motives, if not his exact words.

Richard Cranmer
Heighington Village, Co. Durham

On the fringes?

Clearly, John Lidstone (You Write, April) has the impression that because he has held numerous jobs in the industry, this makes him an authorised critic in which to judge other operators. However, it is interesting to note that he has only ever been employed in fairly minor, short-term roles and has not the responsibility of actually running a company himself. Therefore — 39 years in the industry but who's counting? — I stand by my original comments.

Bernie Waters
Town & Country Travel,
Grays, Essex

Sarcasm 'isn't in his nature'

Regarding the two letters of complaint about John Lidstone in You Write, March, let me deal first with the one about flash photography.

Left: A German-registered Neoplan Skyliner JumboCruiser, showing the engine in the rear of the front section.
DAVID LOVE



There is a difference between pointing a flashgun towards passengers in the back of a taxi and the front of a bus. With so many photographs being taken while the withdrawal of Routemasters is going on, it can be annoying at times.

On the second complaint, I have known John nearly all his working life and can state that he is a very nice, considerate, thoughtful and fair-minded person. Sarcasm is not in his nature. He is only the messenger and most of the criticism of operators he receives goes in his rubbish bin.

Like passengers who write to their local paper with a complaint before writing to the operator, it seems that Bernie Waters's letter suggests he has not taken it up with John.

R. Scott
Southend-on-Sea



Above: Not one of the Town & Country Volvo B6s about which there has been so much correspondence, but 101 (R375 DJN), one of four one-time Harris Bus Optare Exels in the fleet at Tilbury Ferry. **MARTIN WEYELL**

Ex-Birmingham oddity

I refer to 'A Century of Scotland's Omnibuses' in February *Buses*. The original registration of McLennan's GGS 688 was not EOG 281 but FOF 281 (ex-Birmingham 1281).

The replacement top deck from a Morris Commercial Imperial was a result of severe damage when Birmingham's Hockley Garage was bombed on 23 November 1940. I understand that FOF 281 was one of four vehicles treated similarly. Not only was this an oddity, but it looked an oddity. The replacement top deck was of a different size and photographs show a distinctive shelf below the destination box.

GGs 688 operated with McLennan until it was scrapped in early 1968.

Graham Martin-Bates
Glencarse, Perth

What a clanger!

Your March issue was another good edition of *Buses*, but, oh dear, what a clanger in the caption to the photograph of South Shields trolleybus 204 in the Rally supplement. Its Weymann timber-framed body dates from 1937, not wartime. I can confirm that it is still anticipated that 204, a British Trolleybus Society vehicle, will be ready for its relaunch back into service at the spring bank holiday weekend. Little remains to be done; a few tidying-up jobs and an external repaint. It has already had a test run, so we know it goes . . . and stops.

Francis Whitehead
British Trolleybus Society

The missing booklet

Further to last month's Publicity Matters, I can confirm that the 'missing' Dumfries & Galloway timetable booklet does exist. I obtained one at the council office in Thornhill last summer. It includes long distance bus, coach and rail service details, also Irish ferry services. Next time I am in Thornhill, I will endeavour to obtain a copy for John Carr.

Bill Mather
Moniaive, Dumfries & Galloway

Why Edinburgh voted 'no' ...

Having read the comments regarding why Edinburgh rejected road tolls, I wish to make the following observations. I voted for the tolls, but fully understand why 75% of those who voted did not.

The scheme was far too large. London has charged those entering its centre. In the words of a senior executive of a major group that operates in Edinburgh, this city has attempted the London equivalent of charging those who enter inside the M25 (i.e. the Edinburgh City Bypass).

Information given out to voters was insufficient to make informed choices. For example, I could not determine if I was able to drive on to the city bypass without paying, as the toll gate was stated as being on Queensferry Road. This stretches from the city centre to the outskirts. Its exact location was not given.

Peak hour bus services in and around Edinburgh are heavily used. To say that services will be increased from a 20min frequency to 15min, or 12min to 10min simply means that there will be an extra 70 or 80 seats available per hour, most of which would be taken up by those standing or left behind at present.

Many cities have successfully introduced park-&-ride. Edinburgh has yet to seriously address this issue. The Ferrytoll (Forth road bridge) scheme run by Fife Council has been successful. Edinburgh has one small scheme taking commuters into the centre by train and is about to introduce another at Inghliston, this time using buses. How about another six for the rest of the commuters?

Below: Evidence of the restoration of South Shields 204 at Sandtoft. South Shields Corporation Transport heavily rebuilt its body — one of the oldest remaining Weymann bodies and certainly the oldest surviving one on a trolleybus — in 1950. **DUNCAN ANDERSON**



Other councils should look at why Edinburgh failed and address the issues.

- Keep the scheme small and manageable to start with.
- Give clear information to the public.
- Increase substantially the services available before it starts and the public votes.
- Introduce park-&-ride before you vote.

Many councils are ahead of Edinburgh in some of these areas (e.g. York) and should not be discouraged from toll charges. Had Edinburgh planned on spending the money on the points above rather than on guided busways and tram lines (both of which are exceptionally expensive) and if it, even now, tried again for just a city centre toll, it could well still have congestion charges in place in the future.

Ralph Barker
South Queensferry

... and why I voted 'no'

I voted 'no' in the recent Edinburgh congestion charge referendum (You write April). Why? Simply because the proposed scheme was the wrong one for Edinburgh and gave the residents and voters the impression of being nothing more than an additional stealth tax by a Labour-controlled council over its residents and those of surrounding local authorities. The two congestion charge schemes already in operation appear to give drivers a choice. London appears to have a ring road round the charging area and Durham's is purely a dead-end street. Edinburgh's proposal was a much more draconian two-cordon zone scheme, but without an inner ring road around the proposed central cordon. Edinburgh's mainline railway and coach stations would be inside the charging zone, so picking up visitors and their luggage would have incurred a charge.

My main reason for voting 'no' was that while the scheme may have meant less congestion in the inner zone, more rat runs and additional pedestrian dangers would have been created between the zones as some drivers tried to dodge the charge.

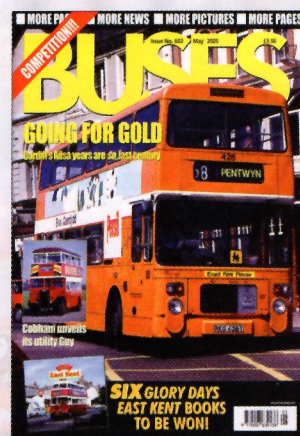
Readers may gain the impression that I am purely a car driver. This could not be farther from the truth as I am now entitled to a free travel concession ticket. I prefer to use public transport whenever it is convenient for me to do so. However, another reason for voting 'no' was that public transport was also to be charged £2 on its first daily crossing of a charge boundary. How ridiculous can that be for a scheme designed to benefit public transport?

The biggest drawback to Edinburgh's existing public transport system is that it is based on a spoke pattern with few links between these main radials. Those links that exist are being cut back owing to late running. This means that to get anywhere one mostly has to travel via the city centre, thus adding time to journeys. The proposed scheme did not indicate an improvement to this position.

I believe the referendum failed because the city fathers did not heed the comments of residents in the run-up to the vote. Maybe, given your letter writer's interest in the Edinburgh scheme, the same scheme should be introduced in Andover. May I suggest the inner zone being a half-mile radius from the information centre and the outer zone the boundaries of the A303, A3093 and A343? Crossing either boundary within the appropriate charging periods would cost £2 a day. Buses would also be liable on their first journey. I wonder if he would then be so keen on the idea. You never know, such a scheme might be a success and Andover would then be the model for the rest.

Chris J. Moorey
Edinburgh

SUBSCRIBE TO BUSES AND RECEIVE 13 ISSUES FOR THE PRICE OF 12



- The latest issue delivered direct to your door straight from the press!
- The comfort of knowing you will never miss an issue
- No price increase for your subscription period
- Exclusive subscriber offers every month

PLEASE SEND ORDER FORM TO:

Buses Subscriptions, Ian Allan Publishing Ltd,
Riverdene Business Park, Hersham, Surrey KT12 4RG
Alternatively, telephone your order on the Subs Hotline:
01932 266622.

The fax / overnight answerphone: 01932 266633
or e-mail us at: subs@ianallanpublishing.co.uk

SUBSCRIPTION ORDER FORM

I would like my new Buses subscription to start with the _____ dated issue.

- 1 I enclose a cheque to the value of £ _____
(please make cheque payable to Ian Allan Publishing Ltd - Eurocheques are not accepted)

- 2 Please debit my:

Mastercard ☐ Visa ☐ Switch Card ☐

☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Exp date: _____ Start date: _____ Issue no: _____ (switch only)

Cardholders signature: _____ Date: _____

- 3 Please invoice me: ☐ Name: (Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms): _____

Address: _____

Post code: _____ Country: _____

Tel no: _____ E-mail address: _____

SUBSCRIPTION PRICES

One Year Subscription

UK:	£42.00
Europe & ROI:	£48.00
ROW economy airmail:	£50.00
ROW 1st class airmail:	£59.50

Two Year Subscription

UK:	£84.00
Europe & ROI:	£96.00
ROW economy airmail:	£100.00
ROW 1st class airmail:	£119.00

Binders

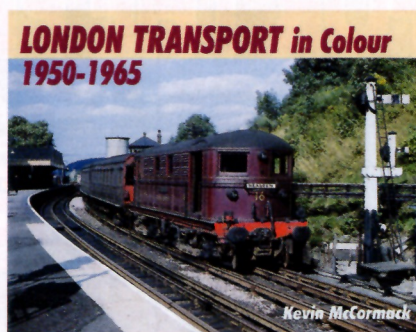
UK:	£7.45
Europe & ROI:	£9.95
ROW:	£9.95

BUSES

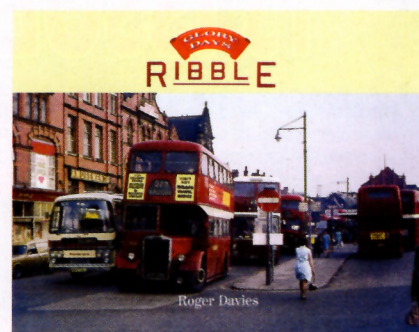
Buy one of our latest road transport books and treat yourself to a 10% discount on some recent titles which you may have missed



GLORY DAYS: EAST KENT
Glyn Kraemer-Johnson and
John Bishop
ISBN: 0 7110 3030 8 HB
184mm x 240mm 96pp £16.99



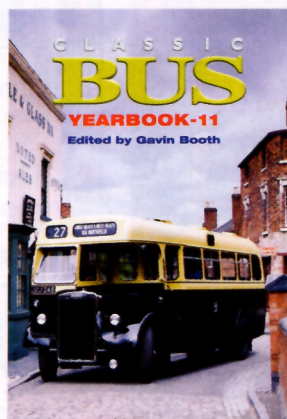
**LONDON TRANSPORT IN
COLOUR 1950 - 1969**
Kevin McCormack
ISBN: 0 7110 3073 1 HB
184mm x 240mm 80pp £14.99



GLORY DAYS: RIBBLE
R Davies
ISBN: 0 7110 3038 3 HB
184mm x 240mm 112pp £15.99



BUSES RESTORED 2005
NARTM
ISBN: 0 7110 3089 8 PB
235mm x 172mm 128pp £13.99



CLASSIC BUS YEARBOOK 11
Gavin Booth
ISBN: 0 7110 3055 3 HB
235mm x 172mm 128pp £14.99



**LONDON'S TRAMS:
A VIEW FROM THE PAST**
Paul Collins
ISBN: 0 7110 2741 2 HB
235mm x 172mm 96pp £15.99

**Order one or more of the above titles and award
yourself a 10% discount on the titles below**

CIE Buses 1945 - 1987
C McIntyre ISBN: 1 85780 192 X
282mm x 213mm 96pp PB £14.99

**London Transport in Exile:
1950s and 1960s**
K McCormack ISBN: 0 7110 3021 9
184mm x 240mm 80pp HB £14.99

London Buses Around Surrey
R Hobbs ISBN: 0 7110 3001 4
184mm x 240mm 80pp HB £14.99

British Trolleybuses in Colour
K McCormack ISBN: 0 7110 3008 1
184mm x 240mm 80pp HB £14.99

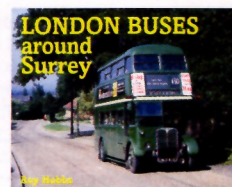
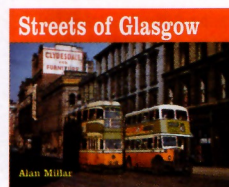
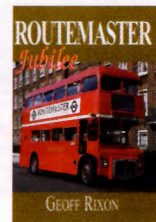
Streets of Glasgow
A Millar ISBN: 0 7110 2994 6
184mm x 240mm 80pp HB £14.99

Glory Days: Aldershot & District
J Hillier & J Sherwin ISBN: 0 7110 2956 3
184mm x 240mm 96pp HB £16.99

Routemaster Jubilee
G Rixon ISBN: 0 7110 2999 7
280mm x 215mm 96pp HB £16.99

Glory Days: Eastern National
R Delahoy ISBN: 0 7110 2952 0
184mm x 240mm 96pp HB £16.99

London Transport in the 1950s
M H C Baker ISBN: 0 7110 3009 X
235mm x 172mm 96pp HB £15.99
National Bus Company - The Early Years
M H C Baker ISBN: 0 7110 3023 5
280mm x 215mm 96pp HB £16.99



Send your order to:

Classic Bus Offer, Mail Order Department, Ian Allan Publishing, 4 Watling Drive, Hinckley LE10 3EY
Phone 01455 254450 Fax 01455 233737 e-mail midlandbooks@compuserve.com

Post free to UK post codes. Credit card orders welcome, any time, day or night.

Overseas: add 15% (min £4.50). 10% for orders over £150

Payment: Visa/Mastercard/Eurocard/Connect / Switch/Maestro and Solo charge cards, Post Giro 450 6154,
Sterling cheque drawn on a UK bank, US \$ cheque (no surcharge), IMO, British Postal Orders.
Orders are sent surface mail, Air Mail by arrangement

This offer applies to all orders
received by 31st July 2005,
subject to availability.

Ian Allan
PUBLISHING

Publicity Matters

We examine the soft sell approach that two Go-Ahead subsidiaries take to promoting their services

Most months, this feature looks at how good, bad or indifferent the industry is at getting across the hard facts of where and when buses run. Do the timetables make sense? Are they up-to-date? Are they readily available from enquiry offices, bus stations, tourist information centres or on bus stops themselves?

But that's not the only way to make the public — and especially the aspirational car owner — aware of the possibilities of at least sometimes taking a bus or coach instead. Some of Go-Ahead's subsidiaries take a far softer approach to the whole business by complementing hard information with the soft sales technique of publishing customer magazines. This month, we're looking at two of them, Brighton & Hove's *On Route* and the Oxford Bus Company's *Horizons*, both of which are produced for the companies by a specialist company, BN1 Publishing. If you know your postcodes, you'll recognise that it is based in Brighton.

Nothing too blatant

The trick with publications like these is to provide enough genuinely general information so that it isn't discarded out of hand as a piece of blatant advertising. At the same time, it also needs to project a sales message. That's a pretty tall order. We encountered a recent edition of the 'in flight' magazine of Stagecoach's South West Trains in which the sales message had all the subtlety of a neutron bomb. An interview with the actress Amanda Holden (she's from Hampshire, we learnt) suddenly

dropped in the gratuitous fact that she likes taking the train because she learns her lines on the journey.

On Route makes no pretence of being anything other than the bus company's magazine, with articles in the Winter 2004 edition including features on service developments like the launch of the South Coast city's first 24hr service and the introduction of real time bus information inside Brighton station concourse.

The magazine isn't designed to be read on long bus journeys, so the general interest articles are short. They reinforce the bus company's desire to be seen as an integral part of Brighton & Hove life, looking at topics such as a ghost reputed to haunt the Theatre Royal, planned architectural developments and the debate on the future of the South Downs. These are straightforward stories with no hidden 'ride by bus' message, but there are little panels at the end with details of how to get there by bus.

Some articles cross the general interest/company divide, with a piece on the latest famous names honoured on the company's buses and a competition for readers to earn local fame by being pictured on the side of a double-decker. The last page spread is about the hard sell — a summary of fares and services from the city centre.

Soft sell is even softer

Horizons is an 'in flight' magazine for the Oxford Espress and Airline services to London and its airports. Like the Brighton publication, it's designed to a high standard. The soft sell is even softer, it being published on the assumption that its readers know enough about the existence of the coach



services to have climbed aboard one before reading the magazine. The Summer 2004 issue had articles on the attractions of London, Oxford and (remember one of these services runs to the airports) Berlin. One of the Oxford pieces focused on high profile and less well-known personalities in the city. Another piece focused on the sorts of purchases (e.g. mini hair dryer, laptop computer or paperback novel) you might make for a journey.

It also included a clever way to get across one of the company's safety messages. An article on the history of the seatbelt — and the 1970s 'Clunk, Click' advertising campaign by Jimmy Saville — is there to raise customers' awareness of the existence of belts on the coaches.

We want to hear from readers, operators and transport authorities about how the industry is tackling the challenge of imparting accessible information to the travelling public — whether in timetables, leaflets or maps, at bus stops, bus stations or on the Internet. If you find items of interest (we want to hear about the good just as much as about the bad) and could write about 600 words on the subject, accompanied by photographs and/or publicity material, please contact the Editor at the Glasgow address shown on p2 or send an e-mail to alan@millar1.demon.co.uk.

COLLECTIONS URGENTLY REQUIRED

Lledo, Matchbox, Corgi, Old Dinky, EFE, Brooklin, Conrad, Lion, Hornby, Scalextric, Britains, Solido, NZG, Tekno, boxed or unboxed, railway etc.

★ LARGE SURPLUS STOCKS

A SPECIALITY ★

TELEPHONE
01132 450691

Can collect anywhere in the world
within 48 hours!

Send us a list or call our hotlines now!

THE LEEDS MODEL CENTRE

56 NORTH STREET LEEDS, LS2 7PN

Mon - Fri 10am - 5pm

★NEW★SHOP NOW OPEN - Rufforth Park

Car Boot Fair - Sundays only

STILL ONE OF THE UK'S LARGEST DIECAST
SHOPS OVER 30,000 MODELS IN STOCK

TOYTOWN, UNIT 3, FINKLE STREET

ARCADE, THORNE DONCASTER

10.30am - 3.30pm Monday, Tuesday, Friday

10am - 3.30pm Saturday

TRADE ONLY PLEASE DIE-CAST MODELS

THE MAIN ITEMS WE STOCK

**CORGI, EFE, BRITBUS, NORTHCORD, SUNSTAR,
MINICHAMPS, LLEDO, VANGUARDS, HORNBY,
CARARAMA, THOMAS THE TANK,
GERRY ANDERSON
& MANY MORE.**

80 PAGE - TRADE LIST AVAILABLE

BUY ONE GET ONE FREE

WE HAVE 1/4 MILLION POUNDS OF STOCK TO CLEAR AT
HALF PRICE. ASK FOR OUR CLEARANCE LIST

WEB SITE

All lists now available on line gcleveland-wholesalers.co.uk
please write to us for user name and password

G Cleveland Wholesalers

Woodcock Hill Industrial Estate,
Harefield Road, Rickmansworth, Herts WD3 1PQ

Tel: 01923 711772 . Fax: 01923 711774

email: sales@gcleveland-wholesalers.co.uk

Callers welcome between 10.00am & 4.00pm
Monday-Saturday at our Rickmansworth trade only showroom



pmpvideo.com

'Another fine selection of films, we welcome offers of cine film pre 1980 or
video pre 1990 - why not share your memories.'



- 1251. Bus Spot Bradford. UK. Buses / Trolleys. Starts with look back at trolleys and buses 1960s/70s then from early nineties video era visits through to 2005.
- 1252. Retro Compendium. Cairo Trams. Starts with 60s scenes by Jack Price then 1977 followed by 1991 and 1997, City routes, Heliopolis and Helwan lines.
- 1253. Shropshire. UK. Buses. February 2005. Visits Oswestry, Shrewsbury and finishes at Telford, bright but cold day, busy with lots of new Arriva buses around.
- 1254. Manchester. UK. Buses. February 2005. An overdue 'bash' at city centre services with hectic weekday scenes near main bus stops in Piccadilly area.
- 1255. Bus Spot Cheltenham. UK. Buses. A brief look back at former glories then regular visits to the town from the early 90s with 9 visits through to 2005.
- 1256. Retro Compendium. Tyne & Wear Metro. UK. Light Rail. A look back at the early years with cine from

- 1981 then video in 1992 with new airport extension.
- 1257. Ghent. Retro Compendium. Belgium. Trams Trolleybuses. All four of our visits to Ghent from 1990 to 2001 combined in one volume for convenience.
- 1258. Bus Spot Southampton. UK. Buses. Starts with film of the municipal and NBC fleets in the 1970s with regular coverage right through to the start of 2005.
- 1259. Hustle 'Bus'tle Hastings. UK. Buses. The Hastings bus scene in an hectic era. Starts old livery 1972 then NBC through privatisation, Topline H&D to 2002.
- 1260. Belfast. Northern Ireland. UK. Buses. The new 'Metro' branding with pink colour scheme, all change yet again, lots of deckers few in old red or blue livery.
- 1261. A Decade in Waterford. Ireland. Buses. A look at buses operating in Waterford city with all visits included between 1994 and 2004 includes independents.
- 1262. Retro Compendium. Italian Trolleybuses in the early 1990s. Featuring Milan, San Remo, Naples and Parma. A very interesting trolley era re-visited.
- 1263. Routemaster Invasion. UK. Buses. All previously unshown film dating back to mid 1980s with the spread of sold Routemasters throughout the provinces.
- 1264. Scotland. UK. Buses. March 2005. Ayrshire visiting Kilmarnock, Irvine and Ardrossan all in good spring weather - plenty of activity especially Kilmarnock.
- 1265. Scotland. UK. Buses. March 2005. Motherwell, Hamilton, Airdrie at Easter plus a look back at the GVVt open day and running day the previous autumn.
- 1266. Scotland. UK. Buses. March 2005. Greenock, starts quite sunny much improved bus standards, Paisley late afternoon also Rhu and Garelochhead.

- 1267. Scotland. UK. Buses. March 2005. Glasgow. Easter Saturday morning visit with the First fleet much upgraded although still a great deal of variety.
- 1268. Cobham. UK. Buses. April 2005. The annual Cobham rally at Wisley airfield in Surrey. The arrivals, mostly in glorious sunshine, a memorable day out.
- 1269. Milton Keynes. UK. Buses. April 2005. A customer suggestion and we are really glad we called by, superb weather, friendly crews, lots of vehicles.
- 1270. Roll on Spain. Spain. Buses, Tram, Trolleybuses, Steam Rail. A grand tour de force of Spain from 1961 to 1981 with authentic sound, many systems.
- 1271. Bus Spot Gateshead. UK. Buses. Starts with cine with real sound taken 1983 in NBC era then forward to the Garden Festival and visits up to 2002.
- 1272. New Spanish Tramways 2005. Spain. Tram/Light Rail. Visits to the new metre gauge line in Bilbao and the four recently opened Barcelona routes.
- 1273. Spanish Buses 2004 / 2005. Spain. Buses. Barcelona buses in 2004, Bilbao 2005 plus a look at the amazing university services running 1967 antics



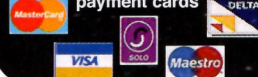
PMP, 17 BIRCHWOOD DRIVE, LOWER PEOVER,
CHESHIRE WA16 9QJ

Tel: 01565 722045 Fax: 01565 722038

e-mail: dave@pmpvideo.fsnet.co.uk

A SELECTION OF FILMS FROM OUR EXTENSIVE RANGE,
SENT POST FREE WORLDWIDE.
£16 FOR ONE VIDEO, TWO VIDEOS ON ONE TAPE £24,
DVDs £16 EACH, TWO OR MORE £12 EACH.
CREDIT CARDS WELCOME

We now accept the following
payment cards



Preservation Update

UTA Reliance restored for ITT rally

Ulsterbus has undertaken further restoration work on former Ulster Transport Authority 234 (6234 EZ), the 1963 AEC Reliance that it has preserved since it was withdrawn 25 years ago.

This classic single-decker, with an Alexander-style body built by the UTA on Metal Sections frames, had its seats retrimmed last winter in moquette similar to the original design. It also underwent a quality repaint and appeared to be in excellent mechanical condition when it participated in the Irish Transport Trust's annual bus and coach rally at the Ulster Folk & Transport Museum on 23 April.

Making its first appearance at the rally, although in preservation for 15 years, was former Ulsterbus 919 (COI 919), a 1971 Alexander-bodied Leyland Atlantean owned by Raymond Begley, who secured the trophy for the best preserved double-decker. Winner of *Buses' Reg Ludgate Memorial Trophy* for the most significant vehicle at the rally was an ex-Ulsterbus Leyland Leopard owned by Dennis Strange.

Top right: Newly restored Ulster Transport Authority AEC Reliance 234. **G. IRVINE MILLAR**

Bottom right: Ulsterbus 919, the Alexander (Belfast)-bodied Atlantean judged best double-decker. **STEPHEN LYNCH**



COVENT GARDEN TO CLOSE IN AUGUST

London's Transport Museum has set Sunday 21 August as the last day the Covent Garden premises will be open before shutting for its major refit. Work on the multi-million pound 18-month refurbishment project begins the following day and is scheduled to finish early in 2007. Over the closure period, the museum intends to hold additional special events at The Depot, its resource centre at Acton, west London.



In the Slough lane: First London's open top ex-Green Line Routemaster RMC1510 — seen leaving Slough bus station — was among the vehicles that participated in the Amersham & District Motorbus Society's first ever Slough & Windsor Running Day on 17 April. The society's Amersham Running Day is on 2 October. **GEOFF RIXON**

RALLY CALENDAR UPDATES

MAY

21 Theydon Bois, Essex. Running day, vintage bus and bazaar.

22 Bristol. Harbourside Rally and Running Day.

28 Morecambe. Stagecoach North West rally and depot open day.

28-30 Sandtoft Trolleybus Museum. Wartime Weekend.

29 Edinburgh Festival of Transport, Silverknowes.

30 Birmingham. Aston Manor and Wythall Two Museums Day.

JUNE

4/5 Manchester. Gardner Engine Rally, Castlefields.

Acton. Open weekend, London's Transport Museum Acton Depot. 75 Years of Green Line. Nottingham. AEC Society Rally, Wollaton Park.

5 Southend on Sea Bus & Transport Show.

Stroud Classic Bus Running Day. Hertford & Stevenage running day.

11 Seaton Tramway Bus Rally.

12 Hull-Bridlington East Coast Run.

Portsmouth Open day, Stagecoach depot, Walton Road, Farlington.

COBUS^{UK}

COACH REPAIRS & REFURBISHMENT



Old or New We Have the Crew!

This is what we have to offer you!...

Specialist Repairs and Resprays to any PSV

Stretch Panel Fitted on Site

Insurance Company Approved

Total Refurbishments & Renovations

Custom Work a Speciality

Professional Advice ● Experienced Staff ●

Friendly Service

Always Wanted - old obsolete coach parts and information on OB, Panorama, J2 etc

Tel: 01262 603829 Fax: 01262 606738

Email: cobusuk@btconnect.co.uk

English and Welsh reports (no photographs) should be sent to: **John G. Lidstone, 15 Beach Court, Rampart Street, Shoeburyness, Essex, SS3 9AF**, marking your envelope 'Fleet News') E-mail text messages (no attachments or photographs, please) to: **fleetnews@lineone.net**.

IN FLEET NEWS THIS MONTH

- **Arriva to refurbish Maidstone fleet**
- **Crusader goes all-Setra S315 GT-HD**
- **Flashy double-deckers for Go North East**
- **Unique Autosan schoolbus for Woodside**

BODY TYPE

AB	Articulated single-deck bus
AC	Articulated coach
B	Rigid single-deck bus
C	Coach
DP	Dual purpose, usually coach seats in a bus shell
H	Double-decker
L	Lowbridge double-decker with side sunken gangway upstairs. All other double-deckers are H (highbridge) regardless of overall height.
M	Minibus
O	Permanent open-top
CO	Convertible open-top
PO	Partial open-top

SEATING CAPACITY

For double-deckers, this is shown with the upper deck capacity first (e.g. 43/30, indicating 43 'over' 30. Where the split is not known, a total figure (e.g. 73) is shown in the same style as for single-deckers. The total seating capacity shown includes all fixed and tip-up seats. The vehicles themselves may show other permutations of seats, standing spaces and wheelchair capacity.

DOOR POSITION

F	Front (can be directly behind front axle on vehicles with no front overhang)
R	Rear
RD	Rear with platform doors
C	Centre
D	Dual (two) doors
T	Triple doors

The letter 't' after the door position indicates the provision of a toilet, while 'L' after the door position shows that a wheelchair lift is fitted.

REGISTRATIONS

Registration numbers issued from 1 September 2001 show a two-letter area identification code (e.g. BU for Birmingham, CU for Swansea, SX for Inverness), followed by a two-digit code indicating the period of first registration (e.g. 51 for September 2001 to February 2002, 02 for March to August 2002, 52 for September 2002 to February 2003, 03 for March to August 2003 and so on. These are followed by a three-letter identification of the vehicle itself. In 'Fleet News', a batch of vehicles with consecutively issued registrations will be shown in the following fashion: LS34-46 (GG51 PYS/T/V-Z, PZB-F/H). The letters I and Q are not used in these three-letter combinations.

Where a vehicle has been re-registered, its previous registration number(s) (where known) follow in *italic* type (e.g. RM48 (LDS 199A, *VL7 48*), with the most recent given first.

2 Travel, Pentrechwyth

The late-March fire at Upper Bank (News last month) didn't affect any of the low-floor MANs, but destroyed Volvo B10M-61/Duple 340 221 (D213 LWX), Dennis Dart/Plaxton Pointer J130 DUV and Iveco 59.12 Mellor Duet K623 XOD, plus two unidentified Darts, one Plaxton, one Wright-bodied, and another coach. Volvo B10M-61/Plaxton Paramount 223 (C123 DWR) and Dennis Dart/Carlyle H115 MOB were damaged.

Withdrawn are Volvo B10M-61/Plaxton Paramount 224 (C114 DWR), B10M/Duple 340 226 (D216 LWX), Iveco TurboDaily 611 (L311 BOD), Mercedes 811Ds H428/9 KPD and Leyland Lynx 2 J629 LHF. Former Shearings Volvo B10Ms N718-20 UVR have passed to Volvo Coach Sales, Loughborough and Volvo B6 M71 HHB has been sold to Ensignbus, Purfleet (dealer).

AK Travel, Smethwick

This is described as the latest manifestation of the Thandi organisation, using the Alma Street, Smethwick address. Vehicles include Dennis Dart/Carlyle H469 UGO (see last month) and ex-Stagecoach Volvo B6/Alexander L425 XVV from Lynx Solutions.

Ambassador, Great Yarmouth

Volvo B12B-62/Jonckheere Millennium Mistrall FD54 DGV, DHX are numbered 181/2.

Amos, Eydon, Northants

The first of the MAN 14.220/MCV Evolution B40F are reported as 51-3 (AM05 BFT, GAB, JAS).

Andrews, Foxton, Cambs

Volvo B10M-62/Plaxton Premiere 350 P984 JBC is

understood to be ex-Bus Éireann. A buyer is being sought urgently for Seddon Pennine VII/Alexander T-type MSJ 385P.

Arriva Cymru AA

The last open-top Bristol VRT/SL3, OVG512 (YMB 512W) is being prepared for further use on weekend tours of Rhyl, then on services 100/101. Mercedes-Benz Vario 323 (R793 DUB) has been withdrawn.

Arriva Derby AA

Scania K93/Alexander PS-type 9510 (E25 ECH) has returned to the driver training fleet from Arriva Fox County, in white and grey training livery, as have similar 9512/3 (F28 JRC, E23 ECH) and Leyland Tiger/Alexander N-type 9506 (E40 ENF).

Arriva London AA

The VDL DB250/Wright Pulsar H43/22D for route 19 include DW103-11/5-7/20 (LJ05 BJV/X-Z, BKA, BHL/N/O/P/X-Z, BMZ).

More AEC Routemasters sold to Ensign (dealer), Purfleet, are RML2351 (CUV 351C), RML2407 (JJD 407D), RML2608/53 (NML 608/53E), RML2685, 2718/26/41 (SMK 685F etc). Leased RML2266, 2301/43/7 (CUV 266C etc), RML2382/3, 2452, 2505/12/4/23/31/6/48 (JJD 382D etc) have returned to London Buses and RML2326 (CUV 326C) has been scrapped. Shillibeer-liveried RML2524 (JJD 524D) has been sold to Malcolm King for preservation, but failed before its scheduled last appearance on the 19s and was at Brixton when last reported.

Also sold to Ensign are MCW Metrobuses M1303 (B303 WUL) and M1406 (C406 BUV) and Dennis Darts DRL151/3 (L151/3 WAG), while DRL203 (N703 GUM) have gone to Arriva North East and DRL205/6/16-8 (N705/6 GUM, P916-8 PWW) to Arriva North West.

Leyland Olympian/Alexander RH-type L317 (J317 BSH) is with **The Original London Sightseeing Tour**, which has sold Metrobus MB389 (GYE 389W) and MCW Metroliners ML16, 32 (C906 GUD, C52 VJU) to Ensign; ML32 has been sold on to Scotguide, Glasgow.

Arriva Midlands AA

Dennis Dart/East Lancs EL2000 2083/4 (L503/4 CPB) and Mercedes-Benz Vario/Plaxton Beaver 2 B25F R950-2 VPU have been transferred from Arriva Southern Counties.

Arriva North East AA

In from Arriva London North is Dennis Dart/Plaxton Pointer B35F 1601 (N701 GUM). Further to last month, there are two ex-Arriva Colchester DAF SB220/Ikarus Citibus B48F, 4083/4 (J926/7 CYL). 4083 is at Alnwick, 4084 at Ashington to replace Scania L113/East Lancs 286 (N286 NCN), which was gutted by fire while in service at Newbiggin. Also from Colchester is Leyland Tiger/Plaxton 4305 (BAZ 7384), apparently for cannibalisation.

Ex-Arriva Yorkshire Leyland Lynxes 5019/20 (H338 TYG, H338 UWT) are allocated to Bishop Auckland, allowing DAF SB220/Optare Deltas 4012/20 (K412 BHN, L420 FHN) to be transferred to Redcar and Loftus respectively, while H339 UWT, H755 WWW have become driver trainers 9992/3. H345 UWX is at Ashington for cannibalisation.

Unusual East Lancs-rebodied Volvo B10Ms 2873/5 (H925/17 XYT) are covering for vehicles being fitted with real time information equipment while 2871 (H922 XYT) has been sold to Coakley, Motherwell.

The entire Stockton allocation is to be fitted with closed circuit television equipment. SB220/Delta 4001 (H209 HCP) is in reserve and Leyland Tiger 217 (F188 HKK) is out of use at Alnwick. Leyland National 2 3514 (PWR 528W) is with a West Yorkshire preservationist.



Below: The burnt-out remains of an unidentified Wright Handybus-bodied Dennis Dart and Duple-bodied Volvo B10M D213 LWX in 2 Travel's yard on 3 April. STEVE POWELL

Dennis/Plaxton Mini Pointer Darts 1726/32/49 (V726/32 DNL, V749 ECU) and DAF SB120/Wright Cadets 1918/9 (W78/9 PRG), have been on loan to Arriva Scotland West, as a result of which Optare MetroRiders 880/8 (N880 RTN, N192 RVK) were reinstated at Blyth.

Leyland Olympian 7301 (C263 XEF) has been cannibalised at Blyth and Optare MetroRiders 752, 874 (M752 WWR, M874 LBB) have been written off stock.

Arriva North West AA

New 2499 (CX54 DKY), a VDL SB120/Wright used on service 84 (Crewe-Chester), should be added to those mentioned previously. Optare Alero/B16F 618 (Y154 VHL) is on loan at Chester, covering for vehicles away for modification.

More Dennis Dart/Plaxton Pointers from Arriva London are 1311/2/6-8 (N705/6 GUM, P916-8 PWW); 1316 is for Huyton, the others for Skelmersdale.

Leyland Lynxes 1719/48 (E49 WEM, H408 YMA) have been reinstated at Crewe, pending conversion into driver trainers. Lynxes 1731/49 (F301 AWW, G329 NUM) are driver trainers 8183/9 at Green Lane and Manchester respectively. Scania open-topper 3995 (G35 HKY) appeared renumbered 3395 after a minor error at Bootle, quickly corrected.

Withdrawn are Mercedes-Benz 155 (N995 CCC), ECW-bodied Leyland Olympian 3037 (B197 DTU) and Northern Counties-bodied 3257 (F257 YTJ). Olympian 3048 (B148 TRN) and Mercedes 811D driver trainer 8180 (K946 OEM) passed to Stafford Bus Centre, Cotes Heath (dealer). Mercedes 96 (P396 FEA) is with Owens, Rhiwlas, Olympian 3048 with GHA, Corwen. Leyland Lynxes 1741/6 (G41 VME, G319 NWW) have been sold for scrap.

Arriva Southend AA

Dennis Trident/Alexander 5442 (W442 XKX) has gone to Arriva the Shires & Essex, exchanged for Leyland Olympian ONCL10/1RZ/Alexander H47/32F 5090 (F640 LMJ). Smartly refurbished all-Leyland Olympian DP 5404 (H264 GEV) re-entered service in April and, contrary to expectation, bus-seated 5403 (H263 GEV) has gone for repainting.

The driver trainer Volvo B6s are to receive white/grey training livery.

Arriva Southern Counties AA

Operation Overdrive Phase Two hits Maidstone in July; Pickering, Thurmaston (the Arriva-owned refurbishment company) will treat 23 Dennis Dart SLFs to a repaint and retrim, air-suspended drivers' seats, Hanover electronic destination displays, closed circuit television and Wayfarer TGX150 ticket machines.

Mercedes-Benz Varios 2381/2 (R951/2 VPU) have been transferred to Arriva Midlands, while similar 2380 (R950 VPU) is out of service.

Withdrawn are Optare MetroRiders 1808/51 (N808 BKN, L800 BUS), Leyland Lynx 3041 (E885 KYW) and Volvo Citybus 7641 (G641 BPH). Fargo, Rayne has Citybus 7642 (G642 BPH), while New Enterprise MCW Metrobus M586 (GYE 586W) has been sold to Amber-Lee, Rochester.

Arriva the Shires & Essex AA

As expected the five wheelchair-accessible VDL SB4000/Van Hool Alicrons on order are for Green Line 757 (London-Luton). Meanwhile, an additional conventional coach for the 757 is ex-Arriva Yorkshire DAF SB3000WS/Premiere 4064 (P201 RWR).

LOTS reports that the new Volvo B7RLE/Wright Eclipse Urban B44F are 3861-7 (KE05 FMX/V, GOH, FMU/P/O/M).

Dennis Trident/Alexander ALX400 H47/31F 5442 (W442 XKX) has been received from Arriva Southend in exchange for Leyland Olympian/Alexander RL-type 5090 (F640 LMJ).

Dennis Darts 3357/9 (K407/9 FHJ) are in a dark green/white livery for Bishops Stortford Park-&-Ride. The ex-Sovereign base at Uno, Hatfield is now reported as an outstation of Stevenage Babbage Road, the former Sovereign headquarters. Arriva's Norton Green Road depot in Stevenage has been merged with Hitchin.

Volvo B6/Alexander 3243 (M843 DDS), Dennis Dart/Wright 3813 (G560 SGT) and Leyland Tiger 4025 (SIB 8529 E324 OMG) have been withdrawn.

Arriva Yorkshire AA

A further DAF SB220GS/Plaxton Prestige B42F from

Arriva Bus & Coach (dealer) is 438 (R28 GNW) at Belle Isle; it was built to run on liquefied petroleum gas but has been converted to diesel.

The last three Arriva London Volvo Olympian/East Lancs H44/30F 516/9/20 (M699/5, 703 HPF) are in service, completing the batch 511-21 (M694, 702, 695-701, 695, 703/4 HPF). Another Volvo Citybus B10M-50/Northern Counties H45/35F from Arriva Southern Counties is 765 (G640 BPH), taking the fleetnumber formerly used by short-lived East Lancs-bodied Citybus G622 BPH.

Mercedes-Benz Citaro/B42F demonstrator BX54 ECV was used from Belle Isle, chiefly on Wakefield-Bradford.

At long last, former Arriva Southend Volvo Olympian/Northern Counties 3350 (N705 TPK) has gone to Arriva North West. Leyland Lynx 333 (H338 TYG) has passed to Arriva North East.

Withdrawn are Optare MetroRider 747 (M247 WWR) and Leyland Olympian/ECW 601 (B601 UUM). Olympian 582 (A582 NWX) was sold to Carlton of Wigley (dealer) and 588 (A588 NWX) to PVS, Carlton (dealer), both for scrap, while the remains of 570/1 (A570/1 NWX) have also gone to a breaker.

Ashall, Clayton, Manchester

Lest it cause confusion, vehicles have been stored here on behalf of Blythswood (dealer), Glasgow including ex-Rossendale Leyland Olympian/ECW C34, 84, 93 CHM, ex-Arriva Scotland West Volvo B10M-55/East Lancs H913/5 XYT and Mercedes-Benz 811D/Wadham Stringer N991 KUS, M278 FNS, along with 12 ex-Stagecoach Manchester Leyland Olympian/Northern Counties double-decks.

Bagnall, Swadlincote

A second new Volvo B7R/Plaxton Profile C70F is 16 (JB54 BAG).

Bakers Dolphin, Weston super Mare

New is appropriately registered BD05 GLD a high-specification 12.8m Volvo B12B/Jonckheere Mistral C36Ft in a gold livery for Gold Service operations.

Battersby Silver Grey, Morecambe

This operator has 22 Plaxton-bodied Volvo B12Bs, plus two B12Ms, with the delivery of two more B12Bs with Panther C49Ft bodywork, one of which is YN05 HVC.

Bebb, Llantwit Fardre

Bebb pulled out of corporate private hire in March to concentrate on bus, contract and National Express operations. Volvo B12M/Berkhof Axial CA52 LAE/O and B12M/Sunsundegui CE02 YRW-Z, CA52 LBG have been sold to Volvo, Loughborough (dealer). New are CN05 DZF-H/J/K, Volvo B12B/Plaxton Panther C49Ft for an expansion of National Express operation, which also involves an outstation in north-west England and diagrams on services 450 and 540. More new B12B/Plaxtons are believed to be owned, but have not yet been identified.

Blackburn Transport

Volvo B10M-55/East Lancs EL2000 418-22 (J418-22 JBV) are to be repainted into the 80% yellow schoolbus livery. Scania OmniCity demonstrator YN54 OBA was used on Line 1 on 7 April.

Leyland Atlantean 18 (VBV 18Y) is preserved by a Blackburn Transport driver and is in 1980s-style ivory and green with red roof.

Blackpool Transport

No new vehicles are to be added the 2005/06 financial year.

DAF SB220/Optare Delta 123 (J123 GRN) is the first of the type in black/yellow fleet livery, as are Optare MetroRiders 588/92 (N588/92 GRN); 588 was the last in mainly yellow Handybus livery.

Leyland Atlanteans 352-64 remain on schools services and, with no double-deckers on order, seem set to continue for some time. A local enthusiast owns 337 (AHG 337V).

Blueline, Maghull

Uncommon former Maidstone Boro'line Scania K92CRB/East Lancs D213 MKK has been sold to Validford, Selby.

Bowers, Chapel-en-le-Frith

Two more B31F Optare Solos added to the fleet include YF05 WDA. Mercedes Benz/Reeve Burgess minibuses HUI 9144 and LIL 7910 have been advertised for sale along with one of HUI 4891, MIL 4685.

Brighton & Hove GA

London General AEC Routemaster RML2725 (SMK 725F) was on loan for a week during April and was used on services 5/A (Patcham-Hangleton) as a farewell to London's Routemasters.

Bromyard Omnibus

A second Optare Solo SlimLine, J111 BUS, is expected.

Burgin European, Sheffield

Former Southern Vectis Bristol VRT/SL3/ECW OD1 666R has been sold for preservation in its native Isle of Wight.

Burnley & Pendle BL

Volvo B10BLE/Wright Renown B47F 1039 (W139 XRO) is here ex-Sovereign, while similar R521 TWR has come from Keighley & District. A second Plaxton Pointer-bodied Dennis Dart driver trainer is V543 JBH.

Mercedes-Benz Vario/Plaxton Beaver 2 668/9/71 (R668 LFV etc) were withdrawn after the Clifton Farm Circular service was lost to Northern Blue in late-January.

Burton, Haverhill TGM

Network Colchester's few remaining Leyland Olympians new to Colchester Borough Transport —

continued overleaf...

Below: London General AEC Routemaster RML2725 during its week in service with Brighton & Hove, with the preserved Brighton, Hove & District Bristol KSW behind. **RICHARD GODFREY**



ECW-bodied C41 HHJ and all-Leyland F245/6 MTW — are being transferred here for schools work. On loan from the same source is Arriva-liveried DAF SB220/Ikarus J56 GCX.

Dennis Trident/Alexander ALX400 V336 DBD has been re-registered T50 BCL. Leyland Tigers G234/5 BRT continue in service but are due for early withdrawal.

Bus 4 U, Smethwick

New is Dennis Dart SLF/Caetano Nimbus 254 (MX54 FWF).

Bu-Val, Rochdale

Marshall Minibuses P550 JEG and P690 NAV are here from South West, Yeovil.

Cavalier, Long Sutton

Ex-Harrogate & District Volvo B6 5317 (M384 VWX) has been repainted into Huntingdon & District livery. Dennis Dart SLF/Plaxton Pointer 5326 (T419 HNH) and ex-Silcox, Pembroke Dock, Dart SLF/Caetano Compass B40F 5328 (V675 FPO) are also here.

Centra

Former Limebourne Dennis Dart SLF/UVG UrbanStars T401-3/13/4 LGP have all returned to Dawsonrentals. Repainting of ex-Mitcham Belle vehicles into red is progressing rapidly.

Scania L94UB/Wright Solar YL51 ZUD is at Neehells from Dunn-Line; this operation retains the legal title Dunn-Line (Flights).

No operations remain at Stansted; all contracts passed to Excel.

Central Buses, Birmingham

A livery similar to London United's has been adopted and the first buses repainted in it were former Kinchbus Optare Excel/B45F P202 BNR and Dennis Dart 8.5SDL3003/Carlyle Dartline H97 MOB.

Centrebuss, Leicester

Further vehicles reported at Grantham are DAF SB220/Ikarus 480 L543 EHD and Optare Excel S160 UAL. Also remaining, but not used, is ex-Go North East Leyland National 2 FTN 704W. Dennis Dart/Plaxton Pointer XIL 8418 (K863 LGN) has been transferred to Grantham from Leicester.

Mercedes 811D/Wright K254 JNV and K510 FYN, have been acquired from MK Metro for Luton and St Albans respectively.

Chambers, Bures, Suffolk

A second ex-London Central Northern Counties-bodied Volvo Olympian is P902 RYO, converted to single door.

Choice, Willenhall SG

As reported in News, Status has sold this operator to D&G, Stoke-on-Trent. Before that, MK Metro Optare Solo 2 (S402 ERP) was on loan at Wolverhampton.

Clearway, Catshill, Worcestershire

Former London Borough of Southwark Iveco Daily 59.12/Leicester Carriage Builders N460 MTC operates the Bromsgrove town service.

Coastal Liner, Wolverhampton

Former Go North East MCW Metrobus MkII A620 BCN is a recent acquisition.

Cooper, Gateshead

The first new coach for this operator Volvo B12B/Plaxton Paragon C49Ft B12 CCT.

Courtesy, Manchester

Former Travel Dundee Volvo Citybus/Alexander RV-types G93/7 PES are acquisitions.

Crusader, Clacton

This operator has replaced its last Setra S250s with five more Setra S315 GT-HDs, the only type in its 26-strong fleet, which also is Britain's biggest Setra fleet.

Cumfy Bus, Southport

Acquisitions are ex-National Express Airport Volvo B10M/Plaxton Premiere 350 C51Ft M521 KPD and Plaxton Expressliner C40Ft-bodied N40 SLK, for new service X7 (Southport-Blackpool). Two Optare Excels returning towards their original home territory are former Blackpool 14/5 (N202/5 LCK) from Swanbrook,

Cheltenham. Cumfy Bus also operates Lancashire County Council-owned Optare Alero 32 (PN03 UGB) on services 107/108 (Walmer Bridge-Chorley).

Other buses given fleetnumbers are Optare Solo M850s YS02 UCB-D, MX53 FDF/U/Y, VU52 UEM, which are 1, 2, 4, 21-4; Aleros YR02 YRU/V, YU02 GPV/X/Y, VU02 TTY, YN03 UYA-F, YN04 XZM are 5-9, 34-41; Dennis Dart/Plaxton Pointer K580 MGT is 10; Leyland Swift J263 KRN is 11; Renault Masters T520 SBX, L123/5/8 DDV are 13/7-9; Optare Excel TIL 2099 is 14-6; Leyland Olympians H551/3/8/62 GKX are 25-8; and Fiat Ducatos W227-9 PHY are 29-31; and Solo M950 (Cummins) MX04 VLU is 33. Ex-Hyndburn Swift/Reeve Burgess Harrier 12 (J264 KRN) has been withdrawn.

Dartline, Clyst St Mary

New for the Royal Devon & Exeter Hospital Park-&-Ride service are three B33F Optare Solos, one of which is YJ05 WCY.

De Courcey, Coventry

MAN 14.220/MCV Evolution B39F 547-9 (AE54 MVY, NUH, MWA) complete the current order.

Denny, Cudworth, S Yorks

Former Universitybus, Hatfield Mercedes Benz 811D/Phoenix B33F H748 CPB, new to Hertfordshire County Council, has been acquired.

Drake, Blaina

A new BMC Falcon is R2 FMD.

Dunn-Line, Nottingham

New are Mercedes 616 CDI Sprinter/Mellor B18F MX05 FOJ/K, FPL, SMO. They have capacity for three wheelchairs. MX05 FOJ, FPL are in Broughton Boomerang livery and MX05 FOK, SMO are in Ashfield Access lynx livery, all in allover yellow. Also new is MAN 14.220/MCV Evolution AE05 EVB in 'The Bridgford Lynx' livery for West Bridgford. Dennis Dart/Plaxton Pointer FM52 GKX is also in this livery.

Acquisitions are Mercedes-Benz 814D Vario/Plaxton Beaver 2 P539/47 PNE from Stagecoach Manchester via Stafford Bus Centre. Ex-Go North East Leyland National 2 FTN 706W acquired from MASS is to be cannibalised.

Ex-Flights Toyota/Caetano Optimo II H3 FTG and ex-Wallace Arnold Volvo B10M-60/Plaxton Paramount 3500 GLZ 3138 (G551 LWU) have passed to Need A Bus, Nottingham, joining ex-Dunn-Line Renault Dodge/Wadham Stringer RBZ 4266 (E594 MYE). Leyland Fleetlines scrapped are ex-Grimsby-Cleethorpes Roe-bodied TFU 62T and ex-West Midlands MCW-bodied WDA 999T.

Scania K113/Jonkheere SJI 8113 and Mercedes O404/Hispano Vita W401 PRC have passed to Stafford Bus Centre. Ex-West Midlands Leyland Lynxes G118/61, 281 EOG and MCW Metrobuses BOK 76, 83V, KJW 312W, LOA 369X have been withdrawn. Withdrawn A399 CRA has been repainted into bus livery. Metrobus LOA 366X was scrapped last year.

Eastbourne Buses

Leyland Olympian 256 (G305 UYK) never entered service; it has gone to Liverpool City Coaches, having been sold to Ensignbus (dealer), Purfleet. Another vehicle painted dark blue is Optare Excel 40 (R208 DKG).

East-West, West Bromwich

Optare MetroRiders L734 MWW and L739 PUA have been acquired from McGill, Port Glasgow.

East Yorkshire EY

New are the first Volvo B7TL/Wright Eclipse Geminis for this fleet, 696-701 (YX05 EDO/P/R-U).

Scania K113CRB/Van Hool 91 (A19 EYC) has regained previous registration L567 FND. Volvo Olympian/Alexander Royales 600/1 (A10 EYD, N601 BRH) have been on loan to Finglands.

Ebley, Nailsworth, Glos

Mercedes-Benz Vario/Plaxton Beaver 2 R816 LFW from Andybus, Tetbury and R629/30 YOM from Zak's, Birmingham have been added for new county council services.

Ensignbus, Purfleet EB

More Dennis Dart SLF/UVG B34F on the X80 are

701/4 (P81 MOR, P504 L0T) while Northern Counties-bodied Darts 713/5/7/20 (L113 HHV etc) have been sold to Glenvale, Liverpool.

The latest acquisition for the Ensign museum collection is Hants & Dorset Bristol K6A/ECW HLJ 44, which first entered service with London Transport. Also in the museum collection is former British European Airways AEC Routemaster/Park Royal H34/24F RMA58 (NMY 655E), which — as illustrated last month — lost former owner Liverpool Motor Services' green/cream for London red in time to participate in the Routemaster farewell celebrations on route 19 on 1 April.

Fargo, Rayne, Essex

Acquisitions are ex-Arriva Southern Counties Volvo Citybus/Northern Counties H45/31F G642 BPH and Volvo B10M/Plaxton C57F NUI 4246 (YNN 31Y). Sadly, ex-Eastern National ECW coach-bodied Leyland Olympian B690 BPU — which latterly had a bus-type front dome — was destroyed by fire on 18 February.

All the ex-Road Car Leyland Atlantean/East Lancs KCK 203/4W and URN 208/9V, new to Lancaster, have gone.

Felix, Stanley, Derbyshire

Another new Scania L94UB/Wright Solar is YN05 GZB. Leyland Tiger/Plaxton Derwent F697 HNU, Volvo B10B/Alexander Strider M301 KRY and Dennis Dart X711 GJU are reported for sale.

Ferguson, Wingerworth, Derbyshire

Mercedes-Benz Vario YP02 XBU is in use.

Finglands, Rusholme EY

East Yorkshire Volvo Olympian/Alexander Royales 600/1 (A10 EYD, N601 BRH) have been on loan after an accident damaged some buses within the garage.

First Berkshire FG

Blue Bird schoolbuses 68001/2 (RD51 FKV/W) are sponsored respectively by Thorpe Park and Proctor & Gamble; 68002 is the first fitted with skylights.

First Bristol FG

New are B37F Alexander Dennis Pointer Darts 42938/9 (WX05 SVD/E). More Dennis Lance/Plaxton Verde B49F transferred from First West Yorkshire are 60943/7/9/63/6/9/76/7/81, 61253 (M405/9/11/25/8/31/8/9 VWW, L230 AAB).

Leyland Olympian 34545 (LWS 45Y), 34640 (CUB 40Y) and Leyland Lynxes 62648/54 (H648/54 YHT) have been withdrawn, while and accident-damaged Leyland Olympian 30536 (818 CWW) is being scrapped.

However, Olympian 34552 (A952 SAE) has been painted in commemorative dark blue/white Bristol Tramways livery to mark the 130th anniversary of public transport in the city. It is named *Sir George White* in honour of the company's founder and carries fleetnumber 238 above the destination box, as the last tram carried number 237.

First Coaches FG

Volvo B12M/Plaxton C49Ft 20530 (WV52 HTT) has been transferred to First Devon & Cornwall.

First Cymru FG

Volvo B10M/Plaxton Expressliners 20038/46 (H202 CRH, H326 DTR) have been sold to Jones, Bryncethin. Dennis Dart/Wright Handybus 45301 (JDZ 2301) was noted departing Port Talbot on tow in early March.

First Devon & Cornwall FG

Volvo Olympian YN2RV18V3/Alexander RL-type H47/32F 31457-61 (N968-72 SOS) have all been transferred from First Glasgow. Ex-National Express Volvo Olympian YR2RV18Z4/Alexander Royale CH43/22F N112/23 UHP are numbered 34192/3, of which 34193 has entered service at Plymouth, re-registered VJT 738. Another acquired in February was N122 UHP.

The PSV Circle reports the transfer of Volvo B12M/Plaxton C49Ft 20530 (WV52 HTT) from First Coaches.

More Mercedes-Benz Vario/Plaxton Beaver 2 B27F transferred in from other group fleets are 52593-8 (R413-8 VPU) from First London, 52529 (S529 RWP) from First Wyvern and 50301/6 (S407/12 GUB) from

West Yorkshire; further to last month's report, 50301/6 are both in Tamar Link pink livery.

The new Tamar Link Alexander Dennis Tridents — 32756-60 (WA54 OLO/P/T/N/R) — are used solely on the main Plymouth-Torpoint routes. They're reported too big to get round parts of the Cremyll/Whitsand Bay areas, so Bristol VRTs continue, especially on Sundays when all the routes inter-work. VR 38573 (NTC 573R) has been reallocated to Camborne from Plymouth; although missed by enthusiasts, my correspondent suggests: 'I am sure passengers will be happy to see it go as the interior upstairs is very poor indeed with hardly any seats the same'.

A surprise repaint into latest Barbie livery is Mercedes-Benz 709D/Wright NimBus 50743 (J143 SJT), but 709D/Plaxton Beaver 51544 (M844 ATC) has been withdrawn.

First Eastern Counties FG

Accident-damaged Dennis/Plaxton Mini Pointer Dart SLF 42551 (S551 WAT) is back in service at Bury St Edmunds after a lengthy absence.

Leyland Olympian 34529 (NTC 129Y) is the last remaining Gardner-engined vehicle at Norwich.

Ipswich-based Olympian/Alexander 34580 (A980 OST) is withdrawn, as are Mercedes-Benz 709Ds 51105/9/10 (L815 SAE, L909/10 VHT), 51881/2 (P681/2 HND).

First Essex FG

New are Alexander Dennis Pointer Darts 42918-23 (EU05 AUK-P).

Another type of Olympian has appeared, this time ex-Glasgow Volvos with Alexander RL-type H47/32F bodywork, 31456/62 (N967/73 SOS), due to appear at Hadleigh as these notes are written. They'll be the newest double-deckers in the Southend area once Arriva's last Dennis Tridents go.

Scania L113CRL/Wright Access-ultralow 61054/7 (R434/7 GSF) have come from First West Yorkshire.

Fairfield Road depot site in Braintree has been sold for redevelopment. Most buses transferred to a replacement site at Springwood Industrial Estate, but those allocated to the 70X passed to Colchester and those on the 509 to Chelmsford. Fairfield Road originally housed three Model T Fords for Hicks's service to Courtaulds Factory at Bocking, later taking in Charlie Gray's scrapyard (1926) and Cuff's Coal Yard (1928). Braintree bus park opened in 1932. On closure of Halstead depot in 1984, Braintree gained its work on the 311 group and again took most Silver End services when it closed in 1988. That same year marked the first attempt to relocate Braintree depot.

Lack of availability of Plaxton Cheetah-bodied Mercedes-Benz Varios for service X30 (Southend-Stansted Airport) has led to frequent substitution by some of the oldest remaining Plaxton-bodied Dennis Darts, like green/yellow 46818 (L818 OPU).

First Hampshire & Dorset FG

Dennis Dart/Alexander Dash from First West Yorkshire are 40619/23/7-9 (M247/54/8-60 VWW). 40628 has been noted at work in Southampton in Barbie 2 livery.

Ten of the new Scania OmniCitys have been named, 65007 Hazel, 65008 Clover, 65009 Yarrow, 65010 Buttercup, 65011 Honeysuckle, 65014 Trefoil, 65021 Daisy, 65022 Cowslip, 65023 Eyebright and 65025 Orchid.

Volvo B10BLE 66174 (W374 GOW) is another of its type transferred to First Somerset & Avon.

Dennis Dart/Wright 45382 (JDZ 2382) and Leyland Lynxes 62552/3 (G112/2 XOW) are withdrawn.

First Leicester FG

Sixteen Volvo B7RLEs are expected to oust the Dennis Falcons. Not all the Leyland Lynxes reported are for service here; Leicester is also used for storage, and 62703/5/8/9/11 (G103 HNP etc) have left for Rotham for conversion into driver trainers.

Volvo B6/Northern Counties Paladin 48025 (L5 GML) went to First Glasgow in April.

First London FG

Service changes in April saw the end of Volvo Olympian operation, so this fleet is effectively 100% low-floor, as Mercedes-Benz Varios 52593-8 (R413-8 VPU) have also gone to Devon & Cornwall. The last Olympians in service were 34006-10/41-55 (N306-10 JBV, P241-55 UCW), though a few remain for rail replacement and schools work.



Above: First Potteries 31522 (M848 DUS) is one of three lowheight Alexander Royale-bodied Volvo Olympians transferred from First Glasgow for services to Alton Towers theme park. They were new to Kelvin Central Buses. **CLIFF BEETON**

Mercedes-Benz Citaro G AB49T artics EA11041-65 (LK05 FDC-F/J/G/L, EZW/X/Z, FCM-P/U/V, FBV, FCX-Z, FDA, FBZ, FCA/D/C) are in service on the 207 (Southall-Shepherds Bush) running from a new base in Hayes, coded HZ. They have been in store unregistered since last October.

Dennis Dart/Marshall Capital DM41211/2/28 (R211/2/28 TLM) have left for First Glasgow, the last of 28 (41201-28) to do so.

First Manchester FG

Further articulated Scania OmniCitys identified are 12005/11/4-6 (YN05 GYC/O/P/R/S), while more Volvo B7RLE/Wright Eclipse Urbans at Oldham are 66795/7, 68000/2/6 (MX05 CBU/Y, CCF/K/V).

Volvo B10L/Alexander Ultra 60355/7-9 (N301/3-5 WNF), 61146, 61242 (N43/1 RRP) are being transferred to Northampton; the last two were new there. As reported in News, Scania/Irizar coach 23017 (YN54 APU) is on extended loan to Aircoach in Dublin.

Mercedes-Benz 811D/Alexander 50149 (N175 WNF) is a non-PSV staff shuttle at Bolton.

MCW Metrobus/Northern Counties 30301 (D319 LNB) has been withdrawn, while a decision is awaited on Leyland Olympian/Northern Counties 30215 (F305 DRJ), the upper deck of which was gutted by vandals. The PSV Circle confirms the withdrawal of Leyland Olympian/Roe driver trainer 30085 (JHU 907X), Olympian/Northern Counties 30129 (B116 TVU), Metrobus/Northern Counties 30287 (D304 JVR), all-MCW Metrobus 30332 (F282 NHJ) and Mercedes-Benz 709D/Plaxton 50130/1/4/7/9/42/6 (M234/7/48/7/23/15/31 VWU).

First Northampton FG

The Volvo B7TLs are the first new double-deckers here for 12 years. As expected, all five First Wyvern Alexander Dennis Tridents, 33401-5 (VX54 MTU/Y/Z, MUA/B), have been in service here.

First Manchester's ex-Timeline Volvo B10L/Alexander Ultra B43F 60355/7-9 (N301/3-5 WNF) have

been transferred here, while B41F-seated 61146, 61242 (N43/1 RRP) are also due to return from Manchester.

Volvo Citybus B10M-50/Alexander DP47/35F 38084/9/92/3 (F84 XBD, H289/92/3 VRP) have gone to First Edinburgh.

First Potteries FG

New are dealer stock Scania OmniCity CN94UB 65027 (YN05 HCL) and Scania L94UB/Wright Solar 65727-33 (YN05 HCO/P/U/V/X-Z), which have non-standard interiors.

OmniCity CN94UB/B42F demonstrator YN54 OCK has been in use, numbered 65026.

In from First Edinburgh is Scania N113CRL/Wright Endurance B49F 62339 (N572 VMS), for which Volvo B10M-62/Plaxton Premiere 60030 (R343 GHS) appears to be exchanged.

Dennis Dart SLF/Plaxton Pointer T342 PNV was on loan to Newcastle-under-Lyme while Volvo Olympian/Alexander Royales 31518/9/22 (M847/9/8 DUS) were prepared for service at Adderley Green, primarily on services to Alton Towers. Borrowed East Lancs-bodied Dart SLF R521 YRP and Marshall-bodied S720 KNV have also been at Newcastle, supplemented by unused Plaxton-bodied R439 FTU, S723 KNV, S377 TNB and W559 JVV.

The Crewe allocation has been increased to take on work from Newcastle where engineering facilities were over-stretched.

Leyland Olympians 30058/61 (A160 UDM, A163 VDM) have been sold for scrap.

First Somerset & Avon FG

New Volvo B7TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini double-deckers 32636-8 (WU54 EHM-O) were re-registered WX05 UAF-H before entering service. To clarify the past two months' reports, B37F-seated Alexander Dennis Mini Pointer Darts 42552-7 were re-registered

continued overleaf...

Below: While First has recently transferred one of its Manchester-based coaches to its Aircoach subsidiary in Dublin, Aircoach's three Wright Eclipse Fusion-bodied Volvo B7LAs were transferred to First Somerset & Avon late last year. The third, 10153 (Y643 AVV, 01 D 40134), still wore its former owner's colours when running in Bath in April. **STEVE RICE**



GROUP CODES

AA

Arriva
Passenger
Services

BL

Blazefield
Holdings

DG

Comfort
Delgro

EB

Ensignbus

EY

EYMS
Group

FG

FirstGroup

GA

Go-Ahead
Group

NX

National
Express
Group

SG

Status Bus
& Coach
Group

ST

Stagecoach
Group

TD

Transdev

TGM

Tellings -
Golden
Miller

WG

Wellglade
Group

YT

Traction
Group

from WU54 marks to WX05 UAJ-O. Meanwhile, further new B37F Pointer Darts are 42903/7-16 (WX05 RVL/P/R/T-W/Y/Z, RWE/F), and also new are B26F Optare Solos 53802-8 (WX05 RRV/Y/Z, WX05 RSO/U/V/Y). Nine new articulated Volvo B7LA/Wright Eclipse Fusions are due for Bath.

Another Hampshire & Dorset Volvo B10BLE/Wright Renown at Bath is 66174 (W374 GOW).

The future of Bath's Optare Solo M850 53000 (V980 XUB) is unclear, as the service it operates, X56 (Bath-Dyrham Park) was withdrawn on 25 March.

A surprise repaint into latest Barbie livery here is former Southern National Mercedes-Benz 811D/Wright NimbBus 51211 (L651 CJT).

First South Yorkshire FG

Volvo B7L/Wright Eclipse 60719 (MV02 VBM) is back in service at Olive Grove but accident-damaged 60716 (MV02 VBJ) is out of use. Some repaints into latest livery are being undertaken by First West Yorkshire at Leeds; Volvo B10M 60602 came back with window advertising for Leeds area day tickets, which was quickly removed.

Further Dennis Dominators withdrawn to reserve are 30422/48/60/77/1/86 (SDT 263Y, B356 CDT, A411/24/30 YAK, C875 JWE). Dominator 30484 (C873 JWE) was also stood down from service, but is now back in use again, but 30420/9/62 (SDT 260Y, UWJ 278Y, A414 YAK) have been withdrawn and 30400 (NKU 143X) has been sold to PVS, Carlton (dealer).

Also withdrawn are Mercedes-Benz Vario 50192 (R125 XDT) and Volvo B10M-55/Alexander PS-type 60475 (G630 NWA), the last impounded by South Yorkshire Police. Mercedes-Benz 709Ds 50179/81 (N112/4 DWE), 50208/16/8 (N277 JUG, M202 VWU, N271 JUG) are in reserve.

First West Yorkshire FG

Further BMC 1100FE schoolbuses are 68526-30/40-2 (YA54 WBM/L/K/O/N, YJ05 PUX, KOW/U), downseated to B55FL, ex-B60F; 68531-9 are not allocated to West Yorkshire. 68526-30 work from Halifax on the Feversham College contract in Bradford. 68524 is at Tigmorden, 68540-2 at Huddersfield.

Volvo B7RLE/Wright Eclipse B40F 66750-5 at Huddersfield have been re-registered YJ05 KOB/D/E/H, KNV/W) and 66758 is YJ05 KNZ. 66750-2 are branded for Yellow Line services 301/302 (Golcar circulars), but most of 66738-58 are for Red Line services 370/371 (Lindley-Rawthorpe/Dalton). Besides B7RLE 66700 mentioned last month, 66702/4 have been downseated to B36F with a centre nearside luggage pen for tendered service 757 (Leeds-Leeds Bradford Airport).

Scania L113 61050 has been reallocated to Cherry Row garage and refitted with guide wheels.

Leyland Olympian driver trainer 30601 (CUB 37Y) has been further converted for use as a mobile fare collection point. Its lower saloon windows are upside down, with the sliding vents at the bottom for ticket sales. Former First Potteries Leyland Lynx 61236 (F102 GRM), acquired in July 2004, has finally entered service as a driver trainer at Bramley. Five further Lynxes, 62531/60/1/4 (E201 BOD, H610/1/4 YTC), 62629 (F629 RTC) from First Somerset & Avon have also been converted as trainers by First Mainline Engineering at Rotherham. Roe-bodied Leyland Atlantean 90077 (WNW 159S) has been withdrawn from Leeds driving school.

Dennis Lances 60943/7/9/63/6/9/76/7/81, 61253 (M405/9/11/25/8/31/8/9 VVVV, L230 AAB) have been transferred to First Bristol; there are none left at Leeds, nor are any Scania at Huddersfield. Dennis Dart/Plaxton Pointers 40088/91 (K921/4 XRF) have gone to First Wyvern, Dart/Alexander Dash 40619/23/7/9 (M247/54/8/60 VVVV) to First Hampshire & Dorset; Mercedes-Benz Vario/Plaxton Beaver 2 50301/6 (S407/12 GUB) to First Devon & Cornwall; Scania L113CRL/Wright Access-ultralow 61052/3 (P432/3 YSH) to First Edinburgh and 61054/7 (R434/7 GSF) to First Essex.

Withdrawn are Leyland Olympian/Roe 30598 (CUB 33Y) and MCW Metrobuses 31046/7/50/1/6/71 (B247 WUL, A943 SUL, B267 WUL, C375 BUV, GYE 368W, OJD 882Y). Metrobuses 7560, 31019/42 and Olympians 30681, 30777/8 have been sold to PVS, Carlton (dealer) for scrap.

First Wyvern FG

Further to last month's report, 42892/3 did not complete

the Alexander Dennis Pointer Dart order, as another is B40F 42894 (VX05 JWW). Alexander Dennis Enviro300s 67646/8 (VX54 MTE/J) are at work on Evesham service 551; they are the first new vehicles for Evesham since Midland Red Leyland National 773 (BVP 773V) entered service in January 1980.

Transferred from First West Yorkshire are former Potteries Dennis Dart/Plaxton Pointer DP35F 40088/91 (K921/4 XRF); 40088 is at Hereford.

Fishwick, Leyland

Two more VDL SB200/Wright Commander B42F are due imminently to supplement recently delivered 6 and 9 (YJ54 CFM/N).

The Leyland marque continues to decline gently in this fascinating fleet, once on Leyland Motors' own doorstep. Leyland National 2 27 (ABV 939Y) has been withdrawn, while the cannibalised remains of similar 10 (WRN 413V) have been scrapped by Morecambe Metals (dealer).

Flagfinder, Braintree

Dennis/Plaxton Mini Pointer Dart VU02 TPK has replaced older Carlyle-bodied Dart G129 RGT on the Freeport Shuttle.

Focus, Much Hoole, Lancs

Volvo Citybus/Alexander G92/6 PES have been re-registered YIL 7767/8.

Ford, Althorne, Essex

Parts of former Southend Transport Leyland Fleetline/Northern Counties MRJ 241W are helping keep MRJ 239W on the road. Long-serving Plaxton-bodied Bedford CHK 312X — owned from new — has gone for scrap.

Bova GEX 790Y has reportedly been sold to Moseley (dealer) for retention as an example of this type of coach.

Fowler, Holbeach Drove, Lincs

Former Wallace Arnold Volvo B10M/Plaxton Premiere R412 FWT (XNO 784) has been sold to Cancu Supreme, Zejtun, Malta. East Lancs-rebodied Leyland Tiger YPD 125Y has gone to Emblings, Guyhirn and Leyland Olympian/Marshall TJT 193X to Judd, Manea.

GHA Coaches, Corwen

New are Alexander Dennis Mini Pointer Darts BA/CA05 GHA, the former with GHA Gold Service fleetnames and branding for service 41 (Wrexham-Queensway-Wrexham Industrial Estate), the latter in Flintshire Connexions 2 livery with branding for service 40 (Wrexham-Treuddyn-Mold). BA05 GHA was delivered unregistered in November in a gold livery for JP Travel, Middleton.

As illustrated in last month's Registration Notes feature, ex-Optare baby Solo demonstrator YN04 XZB has been re-registered NA04 GHA and is also in Gold Service livery for service 42 (Wrexham-Hightown-Wrexham Industrial Estate). A new Scania/Irizar 70-seat S-Kool is due imminently as AA05 GHA.

BMC Falcon demonstrator YN54 VLE was on loan for a week in April and an acquisition from Acton Coaches, Wrexham is DAF MB230/Caetano Algarve A336 VHB for short-term school use.

Mercedes-Benz 814D/Autobus Nouvelle N254 WDO has been re-registered ESU 735.

Glenvale Transport, Liverpool

More ex-Metroline Dennis Dart/Northern Counties B34F are 7137-44 (L101/2/13/5/7-20 HHV) from Ensignbus, Purfleet; 7143 has been named *Pammy*.

Further acquisitions are Dennis Dart/Alexander Dash B40F 7136 (K554 NHC) from Stagecoach Hants & Surrey; Volvo B6-50/Dash DP40F 7200 (L247 CCK) from Stagecoach Transit, B40F 7201/2 (L661/9 MSF) from Stagecoach Wales and DP40F 7203-5 (L453/4 YAC, L423 XVV) from Ensignbus, Purfleet.

Volvo B6/Alexander Dash 7290 (M773 BCS) has been repainted red and named *Ronan* while Dash/Dart 7132 (K566 NHC) *Alex* has been renamed *Ella* and 7136 (K554 NHC) has been named *Maria*. Repainted in allover red and named are Leyland Titans 2570 *Rebecca-Leigh*, 2628 *Steve*, 2868 *Karl* (after our regular GTL correspondent Karl Sutton) and 2969 *Lucie*. Dennis Darts similarly treated are 7607 *Johnny-Jeffery*, 7608 *Johnny-Anglo* and 7611 *Leighton* along with Volvo B6 7201 *Joe* and 7202 *Kerrie*. 7200 is named *Pappy Mo* and Titan 2156 *Nichole*.

Leyland Titan 2655 (NUW 655Y), the first converted to single door by MTL in 1992, has been sold for scrap, as have Titans 2578, 2655 (NUW 578, 655Y). PVS, Carlton (dealer) has taken MCW Metrobuses 528 (GYE 528W), 1134 (B134 WUL), 1237 (B237 WUL), 1333 (C333 BUV) and Titan 2946 (A946 SYE); Goodwin, Carlton (dealer) took Metrobuses 1304/88 (B304 WUL, C388 BUV) and Titan 2278 (GYE 278W) for scrap, these passing on to Wigley, Carlton (dealer). Goodwin also took Metrobus 654 (KYV 654X), Titans 2101/47/59 (CUL 101V etc), 2449/63/88 (KYV 449/63X, KYN 288X) and 3043 (A643 THV).

Godson, Leeds

Former Chesterfield Leyland National EKY 22V has been sold to Hardwick, Carlton (dealer).

Goodwin, Manchester

An impressive new 14m long Van Hool T917/C38Ft executive, 1 (KX05 AYM), made its debut at the UK Coach Rally in Brighton and won Best Executive Coach. Irizar-bodied Scania GO51 WES has been re-registered C1 ECB and Van Hool-bodied Scania R72 VVP is C11 ECB for an English Cricket Board contract on which the new Van Hool is also to be used.

A most interesting halfcab addition is 1949 Daimler CVD6SD/Willowbrook B35F CHL 772, new to Bullock, Wakefield, and passed with that business to West Riding. It later saw service with Hastings & District, Guide Friday and Rexquote Heritage of Bishop's Lydeard.

I'm grateful to Wesley Goodwin for news of his fleet.

Go North East GA

A striking new red, yellow and blue livery will be applied to three new Volvo B7TL/Wright Eclipse Geminis due in May for a relaunch of service X10 (Newcastle-Middlesbrough).

MCW Metrobus MkIIs 3628/30/3 (A628/30/3 BCN) have been withdrawn, 3628/30 passing to Brown, Ely. ECW-bodied Leyland Olympian 3660 (C660 LJR) and Optare MetroRiders 390, 404/5/7 (L390 AVK, M504/5/7 HNL) have been sold to Ensignbus (dealer), Purfleet. MetroRider 367 (K367 SCN) is with Central Buses, Sutton Coldfield, Metrobus MkII 3645 (A645 BCN) is a mobile exhibition unit with Ing Direct Banking, Reading. ECW-bodied Olympians 3651/7 (C651/7 LJR) are with Fargo, Rayne, 3658/61 (C658/61 LJR) nearer to home with Nightingale, Greencroft, Co Durham, similar 3734 (B734 GCN) with Mullany, Watford, while Leyland National 2 4714 (FTN 714W) has rejoined former stablemates with Herefordshire operator S&A, Marden.

Volvo B10M/Plaxton 7074 (YSU 874) has been reallocated to the driver training fleet at Gateshead.

Optare Excels 8152-4 (S152-4 OCU) have gone to Go-Ahead company Aviance UK, which provides aviation services at Gatwick. Thirty-four Excels were sold to Bus Éireann, 8125-51/76-9/82/3/5 (P925-32 ACU, R833-9 NRG, R340 NTY, R841 NRG, R242-7 OCU, S148-51 OCU, T876-9/82/3/5 RBR). For more details of these, see recent and future Fleet News Ireland reports.

Travel centres at Bishop Auckland, Stanley, Consett and Chester-le-Street have closed leaving just one at Washington Galleries.

Gordon, Rotherham

This operator is the first independent to take a wheelchair-accessible Plaxton Paragon Plus coach. B13 WGS is similar to those used by National Express on the London-Bath service, it is a 12.8m C55FLI-bodied Volvo B12M. Gordon's runs 16 vehicles, five of them wheelchair-accessible.

Green Bus, Darlington

An acquisition is Dennis Dart/Carlyle Dartline 45 (H459 UGO), formerly with Arriva Midlands North, smartly repainted in fleet colours. Similarly smart is Dennis/Plaxton Mini Pointer Dart 69 (W769 URP), with branding for service 19.

The four Optare Aleros, 21-4 (YN53 WYZ, WZA/B/D) were withdrawn on 28 November and have since been stored on behalf of Darlington Borough Council, pending a decision on the vehicles and the service on which they were employed.

Gutteridge, Leckhampton, Glos

An addition is Mercedes-Benz 709D M236 KNR from Pickford, Chippenham.

Halifax Bus Company

Un-numbered acquisitions are Ford Transit/UVG B15FL M307 TFR from Ribbles Valley Community Transport and Mercedes-Benz 811D/Plaxton Beaver B29F N571 OUH from Islwyn Transport. Transit TJ19 (B19 TJW, E181 WVU) has been withdrawn and has regained its former registration.

Halifax Joint Committee, Halifax

Leyland Olympian ONCL10/1RZ/Alexander H45/30F F234 YTJ has been acquired and is in full lined-out livery. MCW Metrobus QJD 816Y has been withdrawn.

Halton Transport

The three East Lancs-bodied Alexander Dennis Super Darts are due as 51-3. Dennis Dart SLF/Marshall 85/6 (R402/3 XFL) have been sold to Ogden, St Helens, which has re-entered the local bus market.

Hanson, Wordsley, W Midlands

A second former London Central Dennis Dart SLF/Plaxton Pointer is P721 RYL.

Happy Al's, Birkenhead

Leyland National Greenway ALZ 9328 (EUM 888T) has been scrapped.

Harris Coaches, Pengam

Marshall Minibus P502 HEG is out of use with fire damage.

Harrogate & District BL

One of the ex-London Dennis Darts is due to be converted to single-door and fitted with luggage racks to operate new service 767 (Harrogate-Leeds Bradford Airport). Keighley & District Eclipse-liveried Dennis Javelin driver trainer 162 is also being transferred here.

Heddingham Omnibuses

New for former Network Colchester operations are TransBus Pointer Dart/B34F L338/9 (EU05 AUT/R). They are believed to be part of a cancelled Cardiff order (see Fleet News Scotland for others with Coakley, Motherwell). A new Volvo B7RLE/Wright Eclipse Urban is on order, affirming Heddingham's intention to expand its bus network. I'm grateful to managing director R. J. MacGregor for supplementing notes this month on his popular fleet.

Hoban, Workington

Mercedes-Benz Vario O814/KVC C24F YN54 VUJ is in use in this fleet.

Holloway, Scunthorpe

Dennis Javelin F92 WFA (9595 RU) has been re-registered again to OXL 988.

Holmeswood, Rufford, Lancs

Currently based at Blackburn are DAF SB3000/Van Hool Alizée LUI 9691-3 (L551-3 EHD), Dennis Javelin/Berkhof Excellence 1000L L5 HWD (L320 CVM), Scania K113CRB/Van Hool Alizée HE M364 LFX, DAF SB3000/Ikarus 350 P718 RWU, Volvo B10M-62/Plaxton Premiere 350 P334 VWR, Volvo B10M-62/Caetano Enigma S618 KUT, Mercedes-Benz Vario O814/Essbee X626 JGE and MAN 13.220/Marcopolo Continental 330 PF52 SZN.

Hornsby, Ashby, Lincs

Berkhof-bodied MAN 7455 RH has been re-registered back to its original R505 UEC.

Howells, Deri

Former Lancaster and Road Car Leyland Atlantean AN68C/2R/East Lancs H50/36F is in use as a school vehicle, still in Road Car colours.

Hulley, Baslow

The first new bus for this operator since an AEC Regal in the 1940s is 16 (AE05 EUY), an MAN 14.220/ MCV Evolution B40F.

Iqbal, Accrington

Mercedes-Benz/Carlyle G117 TND is the first vehicle in a new plain red livery. Similar G126 TJA has been cannibalised.

Isle Coaches, Owston Ferry, S Yorks

Former London Buses Volvo Ailsa B55-10 MkIII/Alexander A102 SUU has been sold to Nu Venture, Ayleford.

Islwyn Borough Transport

Dennis Dart/Marshall 34 (N671 CLV) is in white but still sees occasional service.

D. Jones, Wrexham

Optare Solo/B31F YN05 JXX is in use.

JP Travel, Middleton

A new livery is in evidence, comprising blue roof and skirt with yellow in between. Dennis Darts Y3 JPT and T466 HNH are early recipients of this scheme. Optare Alero YS51 HDO has been noted on the premises.

K-Line, Honley, W Yorks

As at 1 April, the company kindly informs us that the fleet comprised DAF SB120/Wright Cadet B39F 1-5 (Y291-4 HUA, YJ51 ELO); VDL SB120/Wright Cadet B39F 7 (YJ05 PVO); DAF SB220/Northern Counties B49F 6, 8 (KUI 9266/8); Optare MetroRider/B31F 10/2 (J720 CUM, L731 MWW); DAF SB220/Ikarus B48F 11 (R11 WAL); Optare Solo B31F 14 (X791 NWX); DAF SB200/Wright Commander B44F 17, 24 (YJ03 PDY, YJ04 HUP); Dennis Dart SLF/UVG 18/9, 21 (R557/9/2 UOT); Optare Solo/B30F 20 (MX53 FDE); Dennis/Plaxton Super Pointer Dart/B44F 26 (KUI 6564); Mercedes-Benz Sprinter/Crest B12F 28 (YX04 KTU); Leyland Tiger/Plaxton DP49F 112/3 (B112/3 GRR); and Leyland Tiger/Plaxton C57F 133 (C133 HJN).

Dart/UVG 18 has reverted to its original registration, transferring registration KUI 6564 to SPD 26 (S782 RNE). UVG-bodied R551 UOT has gone to Glasgow Citybus, while dual-door Pointer Dart 27 (L712 JUD) has returned to Centrebus, Leicester. Tiger 133 is currently out of use.

Keighley & District BL

The West Yorkshire Information Service kindly advises that the new Volvo B7RLE/Wright Eclipse Urban DP44F for revamped Shuttle service 662

Right: Konectbus is taking delivery of some of the first production examples of the new Optare Tempo, including 401 (MX05 EKY), seen shortly after delivery and before vinyls were applied for its park-&-ride duties in Norwich. These buses have been supplied by Mistral Bus & Coach, hence their Manchester registrations.

DAVID C. SMITH

Below: The first brand new bus — as opposed to coach — for Hulley's of Baslow for nearly 60 years is AE05 EUY, this MCV Evolution-bodied MAN 14.220. IAN MOORCROFT

(Keighley-Bradford) are 1801-14 (YJ05 FNP/R-T, KHC-H/K-M/O), with leather seats, tinted windows etc. 1801-13 are in dedicated Shuttle livery, while 1814 is the spare vehicle and is to full Shuttle spec but in fleet livery.

They have replaced the last Volvo B10B/Alexander Striders in normal service here, 502/3 (N502/3 HWY), although yellow 501 remains on Ilkley schools work, and Volvo B10BLE/Wright Renowns 521/2/6/7/9 (R521 TWR etc), 545-51 (T545-51 AUA), most of which are expected to be sold to Traction Group; 529 has remained with Blazefield and gone to Burnley & Pendle. The disposal of 502/3 is not yet known. This leaves 540-4/61 of the previous 662 Airedale Shuttle-branded fleet, which are used on other services with branding to be removed in due course.

The two Mini Pointer Darts acquired from Sovereign are numbered 779/81 (X579/81 MBH), but had not entered service as both required much mechanical work. They are not now to be fitted with Mobitec electronic destination displays.

Volvo B6/Alexander Dash B6 224 (M259 KWK) has been exported to the Far East, leaving 221-3 as the last B6s here.

Kenzie, Shepreth, Cambs

New is K50 CBK, a Volvo B12B/Plaxton Panther C48Fi.

KJB, North Hykeham, Lincs

Former Nottingham City 'standard' Leyland Atlantean/Northern Counties RTV 437X is here, latterly with Marshall, Sutton-on-Trent.

Konectbus, East Dereham

The first Optare Tempos for Costessey Park-&-Ride in Norwich are B42F X1200s 400/1 (MX05 EKW/Y).



GROUP CODES

AA

Arriva
Passenger
Services

BL

Blazefield
Holdings

DG

Comfort
Delgro

EB

Ensignbus

EY

EYMS
Group

FG

FirstGroup

GA

Go-Ahead
Group

NX

National
Express
Group

SG

Staus Bus
& Coach
Group

ST

Stagecoach
Group

TD

Transdev

TGM

Tellings -
Golden
Miller

WG

Wellglade
Group

YT

Traction
Group

Lancashire United **BL**

Alexander ALX200-bodied Volvo B6BLEs 212/5 (P347/41 JND) and Alexander Strider-bodied Volvo B10Bs 505-7 (N505-7 HWY) have been withdrawn. Plaxton Pointer-bodied Dennis Dart SLF driver trainer V550 JBH is in Eclipse livery and has replaced Plaxton Interurban/Dennis Javelin 153 (L153 BFV).

Little, Ilkeston

This operator is now referred to as 'Little' rather than 'Little Bus'. A recent acquisition is the last Leyland Atlantean operated by Kinchbus, Nottingham 'standard', East Lancs-bodied MNU 694W.

Liverpool City Coaches

All-Leyland Olympian H47/31F G305 UYK is here from Eastbourne Buses via Ensignbus (dealer). It was new to London United.

London Central/ London General **GA**

Articulated Mercedes-Benz Citaro G demonstrator BX54 EBC has been on loan at New Cross, numbered MD1.

AEC Routemaster RML2283 (CUV 283C) carries the registration previously on DRM2516, WLT 516. RM994 (793 UXA WLT 994) and Volvo Olympian/Northern Counties NV106 (P906 RYO) have been sold to Ensignbus (dealer), Purfleet, which sold NV106 on to Sullivan Buses.

Lutonian Buses

Vehicles are now rapidly receiving Centrebus-style livery. Transferred from Centrebus is Mercedes-Benz 811D/Dormobile K254 JNV. Dennis/Plaxton Mini Pointer Dart W922 JNF has 'Value' branding for route 17 (Luton-Asda-Colwell Rise). Delicensed long-term are Dennis Dart/Plaxton Pointer J370 GKH and Carlyle-bodied G128 RGT.

M Travel, Normanton, West York

Acquisitions are former Travel West Midlands MCW Metrobus Mk11s ROX 629Y and A109 WVP. DAF SB220/Optare Delta F702 ECC is on service 134 (Castleford-Pontefract) on a regular basis. Mk1 Metrobus LOA 350X has been sold to Watts, Leicester.

Thanks to transport manager Anthony Lee for this news of his fleet.

M&M, Accrington

Former Stagecoach Cumberland Mercedes Benz 608D/Reeve Burgess B20F D44/5 UAO have been sold.

Marshall, Sutton-on-Trent

Another operator replacing former Mass Transit services in Grantham, Dennis Dart SLF/Plaxton Pointer 2 DS51 (S4 YRR) is being used on service 608 (Grantham-South Witham). Recently acquired is H114 ABV, Volvo B10M Citybus/Alexander RV-type, still in Blue Bus, Bolton colours.

MASS, North Anston

A new fleet-numbering system is being introduced across the Mass fleet. Coaches and single deckers have 1xxx added as a prefix to the last three numbers of the registration. Double-deckers have a 5xxx prefix, so ex-Leon Dennis Trident W599 GCW is 5599 and Leyland Titan WYV 13T is 5013. All the Brightbus three-axle yellow schoolbuses have a 6 in front, so B942 GWJ becomes 6942.

A slight exception to the numbering pattern is that Leyland National Greenway 1216 (IIL 2160), formerly of East Yorkshire and Aston Express, has been acquired and numbered out of sequence. It is based at Finningley. The reason for the odd number is to avoid a clash with Optare Excel 1160 (S160 UAL); 1160/5 (S160/5 UAL) have been reallocated from Grantham to Finningley and are route branded as is 1154 (S154 UAL), for service 191 (Doncaster-Finningley).

Other transfers from Grantham to Finningley have comprised Leyland Tiger 127 (GDZ 885) and Volvo B10M coach 5001 (N1 MAS), the latter re-registered back to N157 BFC.

Withdrawn at Finningley are Leyland Tiger FIL 4146

Right: Nottingham City Transport 492 (L492 FRR), an East Lancs-bodied Volvo Olympian, is one of the last seven buses left in South Notts livery, which is being phased out after 79 years. NCT bought the South Notts business in 1991. TONY WILSON

and Optare MetroRiders M927 TYG, N92 WOM. Ripley, Carlton (dealer) has bought the remains of Leyland Tigers MSU 174, FIL 3452, D320 NEC, Leyland Olympians JTY 394X, WDC 217Y, ANA 2, 3Y and Optare MetroRider 5268 (N268 XOJ).

Mayne, Manchester

Former Barton DAF MB230/Plaxton Paramount D643 WNU has passed to Smith, Lincoln.

Meridian Line, Royston, Herts

A highly unusual new coach that appeared at the UK Coach Rally (see p24) is OO05 MLT, an MAN-powered Ayats Platinum integral. Ex-Wilts & Dorset Optare MetroRider J935 JJR is also here ex-Southdown PSV, Copthorne, wearing green/white livery and noted on service 31.

Metrobus **GA**

The five new Scania OmniCitys, 541-5 (YN05 HFE-J), in plain red livery, entered service on X26 (Heathrow-East Croydon) on 16 April.

Metroline **DG**

The five Optare Solo SlimLines for routes H1, H2 and H3 are now due as NSM218-22 (YJ05 WBT-X), ousting current Mercedes-Benz and Optare MetroRider minibuses.

Service changes in late May will see Park Royal garage closed. Routes 143 and 326 are to be reallocated from Cricklewood to Perivale, routes 316, 611 and 643 moving the opposite way, and 460 from Park Royal to Perivale on 21 May. Route 232 is reallocated from Cricklewood to North Wembley, 266 from Park Royal to Cricklewood.

The next Alexander Dennis Trident/ALX400 deliveries were due to start delivery from mid-April and as TA638-59 (LK05 GFO/VX-Z, GCA/E/F/J/O/P/U/V/X-Z, GHA/B/D/F-H), some of which will run from Park Royal for a short period. Displaced AV-class Volvo Olympians are to be reallocated to Harrow Weald for school contracts, replacing the last MCW Metrobuses and single-deck workings on route 84, and to Holloway for route 4. V-class vehicles at Holloway are expected to replace MM-class MAN driver trainers.

Metrobuses M1, 208, 415, 524, 700, 864/75 were reallocated to Harrow Weald for a short Indian summer before final retirement, but M208, 524, 700, 864 were quickly withdrawn again and M415 is a permanent driver trainer.

The last of Thorpe's ex-Grey-Green East Lancs-rebodied Volvo B10M double-deckers, VE164/70-2 (B864/70-2 XYR), have been sold to Ensign (dealer), Purfleet along with Metrobuses M809 (QJD 809Y), M1042 (A742 THV), M1114 (B114 WUL) and ex-Thorpe M208 (GOG 208W), M524 (POG 524Y) and M700 (A700 UOE).

Midland, Asbury

This new operator was noted on rail replacement work at Coventry using NUI 6093, a Mercedes-Benz 811D/Autobus Nouvelle C25F.

Midland Routemaster, Potterspurty, Northants

After an 18-month break, this relocated operator is back again, using ECW-bodied Leyland Olympian DBV 135Y, noted working the Beacon Bingo service in Northampton still in the livery of former owner Tanat Valley, Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant.

MK Metro **SG**

The long-wheelbase Optare Solo/B37F are 26/7 (YJ05 JXU/V). Withdrawn are Mercedes-Benz 811D/Wright NimBus 70/1 (K510 FTN, K254 JNV). AEC Routemaster/Park Royal RM16 (VLT 16) has been removed for storage elsewhere owing to a lack of spare space, although heritage ex-Rhymney Valley Leyland Titan PD3/4/Massey 266 (PAX 466F), Britain's last new lowbridge bus, remains on-site.

Network Colchester **TGM**

Freshly painted ECW-bodied Leyland Olympian 341 (C41 HHJ) and all-Leyland 345/6 (F245/6 MTW) have gone to Burton, Haverhill for schools work; the town is almost completely devoid of its once modern Colchester Borough fleet. Only 1991 all-Leyland Olympians 347-9 (H47-9 MJN) remain.

Newport Transport

Alexander-bodied Scania N113DRBs 47/9, 51/2 (G47 FKG etc) have been withdrawn.

NIBS, Wickford, Essex

Due around July is the first-ever brand new double-decker for this fleet, a Scania OmniDekka N94UD/East Lancs with 3+2 seating for schoolchildren, and LED destination equipment.

Norfolk Green, King's Lynn

Another Stagecoach South East Dennis Dart/Alexander Dash B40F on loan is 241 (J541 GCD), a replacement for K567 NHC recorded last month.

North Birmingham Busways, Erdington

All-white rental Dennis Dart SLF/Plaxton Pointer 2 X187 BNH has been on loan with a lengthy explanation for its use displayed on its windows.

Northern Blue/Viscount Central, Burnley

Ex-Stagecoach Manchester Dennis Dominator/Northern Counties H43/32F B904 TVR is here.

North Lincolnshire County Council

Optare Alero YN54 LLE is in a bright red and blue livery for 'Isle Villager' demand-responsive services in the Barton-upon-Humber area.

Nottingham City Transport

Volvo Olympian/East Lancs 485-7 (L485-7 NTO) have gone to Ensign, Purfleet (dealer) and similar 482 (K482 GNN) has gone to TM Travel, Staveley. Volvo B10B/Plaxton Verde 765 (N480 DKH) is another new driver trainer.

Scania N113DRB/Alexander driver trainers 851/6 (G751/6 SRB) have been withdrawn and join 855 (the one donated to the Asia Bus Response appeal) parked up at Trent Bridge.

Nu Venture, Aylesford, Kent

Leyland Titan T1097 (B97 WUV) has been repainted in Chatham & District livery, while former London Buses Volvo Ailsa B55-10 MkIII/Alexander A2 (A102 SUU) has been acquired from Isle, Owston Ferry.

Ogden, St Helens

For a return to bus operations, this operator has bought Dennis Dart SLF/Marshall B39F R402/3 XFL from Halton Transport.



Olympian, Harlow

The London Road office at Bishops Stortford has been closed. All operations are reported as being concentrated at Harlow and we understand that a workshop is being sought to replace the rented Start Hill site.

Oxford Bus Company GA

Alexander Dennis Enviro300 demonstrator SN54 HXG has been on loan, temporarily numbered 413 for its stay. Ex-London General Dennis Darts 411/2 (P732/9 RYL) entered traffic in March.

A real time bus information system is being installed in Oxford and can be viewed at www.oxford.acislive.com.

PC Coaches, Lincoln

Another Scania N112DRB/East Lancs here is E718 LFG, retaining Brighton & Hove livery.

People's Express, West Bromwich

Now here — the renamed Pete's Travel — is KP02 PUX, a Dennis Dart/Plaxton Pointer from Waverley Travel, Edinburgh. Ex-Dawsonrentals (dealer) Dart SLF/Wright Crusaders R527/30 YRP are here.

Preston Bus

The first of the former Lothian Leyland Olympian/Alexander RH-types have entered service and look superb in fleet livery, 125/7/31 (E325/7/31 MSG) being noted. All 10 were repainted in Edinburgh, and then taken to East Lancs-owned S&T Coachworks in Blackburn for removal of centre doors (thereby presenting the sight of them in dual-door format in Preston livery for just a few days). They are being used on regular service as well as on some schools services.

Reading Transport

Preservationists secured former 'Jumbo' Bristol VRT/Northern Counties 31 (NDP 31R) in March from Direct Communications, St Ives, where it was a mobile exhibition unit.

Leyland Titan 69 (YJB 69T) transferred to Abbey Coaches, High Wycombe, from the associated company Smith, High Wycombe, around last September. MCW Metrobuses 144/6 (A144/6 AMO) have moved on from the Ensignbus fleet where they carried the same fleet

Below: Oxford Bus Company 412 (P739 RYL) is one of two Plaxton Pointer-bodied Dennis Dart SLFs transferred within the Go-Ahead group from London General. **PHIL HALEWOOD**



Right: Former Reading Transport 31 (NDP 31R), the Northern Counties-bodied Bristol VRT/LL3/6LXB recently rescued for preservation, arriving at the Cobham Bus Museum's Wisley gathering on 3 April. **ALAN MILLAR**



numbers; 144 joined Guide Friday allocated to Cambridge last June and 146 went to Brean & Berrow, Somerset, in February 2004. Former 192 (LMO 192X) passed in March from Nash (dealer), Weybridge to VisiBuzz, Vilvoorde, Belgium, where it is thought it will become a marketing/advertising unit. Optare StarRider 203 (F533 NRD) went from Henderson, Penygraig, to Wacton (dealer), Bromyard, in December. Bova Futura 274 (R466 GUA) saw service with APT, Rayleigh, from last May before being sold to Coachways, Rawtenstall, by September and former Optare MetroRider demonstrator 625 (M23 UUA) was a direct sale from the Newbury Buses fleet to Blue Bus, Bolton in January 2004.

Reliance, Sutton-on-Forest, N Yorks

New is Volvo B7RLE/Wright Eclipse Urban DP43F YJ05 UKR.

Richardson, Midhurst

Two new Volvos for this West Sussex operator were entered in the Cobham Bus Museum's vehicle gathering at Wisley on 3 April. Of most note is PN05 SYF, a B7TL double-decker with coach-seated East Lancs Vyking body for schools transport and rail replacement work. It was

accompanied by YN54 WWR, a B12B with Plaxton Panther body.

Road Car YT

New Volvos at Skegness are B7RLE/Wright Eclipse Urban B43F 831-6 (FX05 GXJ-O) and 917 (FX05 GXP), a further B7TL/East Lancs Vyking DPH47/30F. The Eclipses are in a modified canary yellow/red/blue Superbuzz livery.

Also in stock are Optare Solo M780/B24F 81-3 (MF54 WMA/C/D), unusually on rental from Mistral Bus & Coach for North-East Lincolnshire's demand responsive Phone-&-Ride services U1 and R1, funded respectively by Urban and Rural Bus Challenge funds. They are red with vinyls to council design. Several livery variants have appeared. Dennis Dart SLF 513 (T513 SVL) is in a similar style to the new B7RLEs. Leyland Olympian 601 (B501 FFW) is also in an experimental yellow and green scheme with entirely yellow rear, and Olympian 641 (D381 XRS) has green base with yellow above, but swept upwards in curves to the rear. Olympians

652/4 (L602/4 NOS) have livery colours swapped, with yellow base and green above, giving a predominantly yellow rear but with green wrapping round either side of the upper deck, and are branded for service 16 in Grimsby, where Road Car runs side by side with Stagecoach. Olympian 640 (D380 XRS) has a similar colour layout but has Superbuzz/InterConnect-style canary yellow rather than the conventional golden yellow. Scania N113CRB/Plaxton Verde 278 (J278 UWO) has a single-deck version of the yellow base with green above and curved sweep upwards to the rear and it is likely that future repaints of step-entrance vehicles will be in this style.

Yorkshire Traction is repairing accident-damaged Scania 274 (J274 UWO); initial expectations were that it would be scrapped.

MCW Metrobuses 752/6 (BOK 22V, LOA 416X) have been cannibalised at Lincoln, where Leyland National 2 213 (LRB 213W) remains in use as a store-shed.

Withdrawals are of Mercedes-Benz 811D/Optare StarRiders 362/8/70 (F793 DWT, G123 KUB, G841 LWR), Reeve Burgess-bodied 372 (H202 TWE) and Carlyle-bodied 375 (H315 TWE). ECW-bodied Olympians 625/7 (TSO 25/7X) have gone to City Scrap, Lincoln, and East Lancs-bodied 642 (DFW 42X) to Stephenson, Rochford (dealer), followed by Mercedes-Benz 811Ds 370/2/5 (G841 LWR, H202, 315 TWE), which went to Daly, Warrington.

Grateful thanks to managing director Paul Hill for welcome continued source data on his fleet.

Roadliner, Poole

This small operator has ordered a 102-seat East Lancs-bodied Volvo B9T tri-axle double-decker, similar to those just delivered to Weavaway, for next year. It entered its latest coach, Scania K113EB/Irizar PB Gran Turismo C49Ft MR05 ELF, in the UK Coach Rally in April.

Ross, Featherstone

Optare MetroRider 9 (N811 CKA) has passed to Redline, Penwortham.

Rossendale Transport

From commercial assistant Brendan O'Reilly comes news of new Optare Solos 54-63 (YJ05 JWC-G/K-O); 54 (YJ05 JWC) is the fourth bus to carry fleet this number since deregulation, following Freight Rover Sherpa D954 NOJ, MCW Metrorider E979 DGS and Optare MetroRider J584 CUB — immediately before deregulation, 54 was Leyland Leopard/East Lancs JTF 154F.

The council-owned company has ordered four more Volvo B7RLE/Wright Eclipse Urbans for delivery later this year. Two will be broadly similar to those already operated but the other two will have 3+2 seating and seatbelts, for contracted school services and school swimming transport.

As the new Solos became ready for service with appropriate vinyls, ex-London Optare MetroRider 14 (L814 KCW), ex-London Dennis Dart/Carlyle 83/5-7 (H109/12/4/27 MOB), together with 101/3 (H101/3 VFV)

continued overleaf...

Left: Nu Venture Leyland Titan T1097 (B97 WUV) in the livery of Chatham & District livery, 50 years after Maidstone & District absorbed the Chatham company. **ROGER DAVIES**

GROUP CODES

AA

Arriva
Passenger
Services

BL

Blazefield
Holdings

DG

Comfort
Delgro

EB

Ensignbus

EY

EYMS
Group

FG

FirstGroup

GA

Go-Ahead
Group

NX

National
Express
Group

SG

Status Bus
& Coach
Group

ST

Stagecoach
Group

TD

Transdev

TGM

Tellings -
Golden
Miller

WG

Wellglade
Group

YT

Traction
Group

bought new were withdrawn, as were ex-Brighton & Hove Leyland Lynx 196 (G996 VVV) and Mercedes-Benz 199 (N352 BKK). Dart 86 has passed to Glasgow Citybus.

Step-entrance Darts still running on 4 April were ex-London 82/8 (H104/28 MOB) and ex-Mayne 126-9 (L26/7 FNE, K28/9 XBA). 126-9 are not to be withdrawn yet, but are confined to schooldays-only workings at Rochdale depot.

Safeguard, Guildford

Volvo B10M/Plaxton Premiere J705 CWT was sold to Plaxton, Anston (dealer), after transfer of its cherished registration, 247 FCG, to G514 EFX, now in the Farnham Coaches fleet. Mercedes-Benz O404/Hispano Vita 515 FCG has transferred from Farnham Coaches to the parent fleet at Guildford.

Selwyns, Runcorn

New VDL SB4000XF/Van Hool Alizée 2 C49Ft 110-2 (YJ05 PVZ, PWE/F) have been noted in use on a National Express Birkenhead-Southsea diagram.

Shearings, Wigan

This season's 30 new Volvo B12Ms comprises Van Hool Alizée C42Ft-bodied 701-15 (MX05 AFU/V/Y/Z, AGO/U/V/Y/Z, AHA/C-G), Jonckheere Mistral-bodied 716-20 (MX05 AHJ-L/N/O) and Plaxton Panther-bodied 721-30 (MX05 AHP/U/V/Y/Z, AJO/U/V/Y, AKF). All wear Premiere Class livery.

Sheffield Community Transport

Optare Solo YJ54 UXN is in use.

Sleafordian, Sleaford

New Optare Solo SlimLines are YJ05 JWU/P, in sea green Lincolnshire County Council Into Town livery for town services in Sleaford.

SM Travel, Harlow

Two Irisbus Scolabus/Vehixel schoolbuses are at work, first reported being FD54 EOO. Iveco 49.10/Marshall M291 AJC is here from Olympian, which didn't use it.

Southdown PSV, Copthorne

Operations manager Paul Llewellyn kindly advises that this company took over the Salfords, Surrey-based business of Connexions Europe, which operates a shuttle service between Gatwick Airport and the Europa Hotel, on 28 February. The deal brought Dennis Dart SLF/Alexander ALX200 B19F X291 ABU into the fleet, and Southdown has transferred Dennis Dart/Carlisle Dartline B25F G36 TGV from dealer stock to be the spare vehicle for this contract.

Optare MetroRider J935 JJR has been sold to Meridian Line, Royston, leaving the fleet as at 1 March as MCW Metrobus EYE 321V, Leyland Lynxes F165 SMT, G299, 300 KQV, J922/5 MKC, Leyland Olympian A154 UDM and the two Darts on the Europa contract.

South Lancs, Atherton

Cummins-powered B33F Optare Solos K40, 50 SLT entered service at the end of March, replacing Dennis Dart/Wright Handybuses J627/38 KCUJ.

Stagecoach Cambridgeshire ST

Volvo B10M-62/Jonckheere Mistral C49Ft 52621 (S901 CCD) has been transferred to Peterborough from Stagecoach South East.

Stagecoach East Midlands ST

Former Manchester Leyland Olympian/Northern Counties H43/30F 13026, 13178/81/5, 13221 (A26 ORJ,

Right: Stagecoach Manchester was quick to apply its identity to the East Lancs Lolyne-bodied Dennis Tridents taken over with the Dennis's of Dukinfield business including 17648 (W531 GCW).
PHIL HALEWOOD

C178/81/5 YBA, C221 CBU) — 13026 came from Stagecoach East — and Stagecoach South East ECW DPH42/30F-bodied 14170 (C170 ECK) are at Hull to cover extra mileage caused by the eight-month closure of North Bridge (News last month).

Volvo B10M/Plaxton Expressliners 52195 (LJY 145, L125 NAO) and 52298 (N448 XVA) have gone to Stagecoach Wales.

Stagecoach London ST

New for Megabus.com are CH65/24Ft Neoplan Skyliners 50141/2 (KX05 HVE/F); the top deck seating capacity of one of these 13.8m vehicles is greater than an entire RM-class Routemaster.

More Dennis Darts cascaded are 33351-6 (P801-6 NJN) to Stagecoach Warwickshire, 34142/3/6/51 (V142 MVX etc) to Western Buses and 34144/5/53-5 to Wales (V144 MVX etc). Driver training DAF SB220/Optare Deltas moving on are 26002 (J402 LKO) to Stagecoach West and 26010 (G684 KNW) to East Kent.

Plaxton's Anston workshops are converting AEC Routemasters RML2493, 2709/49 (JJD 493D, SMK 709/49F) to open-top by for export to Coach USA in Canada. The flooded examples lost at Carlisle, RML2429/51/70/88/95, 2592, 2748 (JJD 429/51/70/88/95, 592D, SMK 748F) have moved on to Ensign, Purfleet (dealer) for sale; RML2429 is with Sullivan Buses.

Stagecoach Manchester ST

The Dennis buses acquired from Dennis's, Dukinfield have been numbered as follows: Dart SLF/Plaxton Pointer 33081-7/90-5/8-100 (P547 HVM, P978-80 LNB, P112/3 OJA, R572-5 ABA, R103 BDB, T63 AUA, T965 PVR, MX04 AXN/P/R), Dart SLF/East Lancs Spryte 33096/7 (Y951/2 YRN) and Trident/East Lancs Lolyne 17648-50 (W531 GCW, X792/3 JHG), 17698/9 (MW52 UJE/F, not as shown last month). The Tridents are the only East Lancs Lolyne in the Stagecoach fleet and 17648-50/99 were repainted in corporate livery in April, followed into the paintshop by 33083/95/7. 17698 was used from Hyde Road on ex-Dennis's routes in Dennis livery but with Stagecoach fleetnames. Darts 33090/2/6/8/100 are in use from Stockport covering Dennis's school contracts while 33084/99 are at Charles Street for service 345; all retain Dennis's livery at this stage, although 33100 is in plain white.

The ex-Go North East Dart/Wright Handybuses acquired from Dennis's were numbered 32272-9 (J606 JCU, J951/2 MFT, K857/65 PCN, K366/8/9 RTY)



but were sold to Ensignbus (dealer), Purfleet, without use.

Also sold, to Fleetlink (dealer), are Mercedes-Benz Varios 42530/6/9/47/8/63/4 (P530 PNE etc).

Leyland Olympians 13191, 13210/2 (C191 YBA, C210/2 CBU) are back in use, ex-reserve. Further Olympians transferred to Stagecoach East Midlands at Hull are 13178/81/5, 13221 (C178/81/5 YBA, C221 CBU).

The only buses still in Stagecoach stripes are three Volvo Olympians and one Trident. Three-axle Olympians 14239/40 have reverted to original registrations, F201/02 FHH, their Routemaster registrations remaining in Scotland; they entered service in full Megabus.com livery, but on local routes.

Stagecoach North East ST

The nine yellow and green-liveried, New Zealand-built, B20D-seated Designline Olymbus hybrid midibuses are due to inaugurate the showpiece Newcastle-Gateshead Quays link in time for the Tall Ships race on 25-28 July.

Transfers into Busways meanwhile are Volvo B10M-60/Plaxton C51F 52082 (G531 LWU) and 52116 (K758 FYG) from Stagecoach Bluebird for conversion into driver trainers, replacing Dodge Commando G13/Wadham Stringer 48022 (D157 HHN).

Volvo B10M-55/Northern Counties B48F 20294 (M404 SPY) has moved from Transit to Busways.

Mercedes-Benz 709D 40792 (N342 KKH) has become a staff shuttle, but 40283 (G283 TSL) has been sold for scrap.

Stagecoach North West ST

The Bristol VR, 15731 (PHH 149W) moved to Preston in April for additional school commitments, but was due back to reserve by 14 May. Derofed Volvo Olympian/Alexander H51/36F 16294 (R294 HCD) has been transferred from Stagecoach South East to become the newest Lakeland Experience open-topper; 16643 (P273 VPN) has gone to South East to replace it.

Volvo B10M-55/Alexander B49F 20959 (R959 XVM) has come from Manchester and Dennis Dart SLF/Alexander B29F 34099 (S499 BWC) from East London. Volvo B10M 52027 (NSU 133) has reverted to original registration M104 XBW.

The 39 new Alexander Dennis Pointer Darts for Carlisle are expected to start to enter service from 1 July. Meanwhile, salvage dealer Lloyd, Hixon, Staffs took the following buses lost in the January floods there: Leyland Olympian/Alexander 14230/1/51 (K130/1 DAO, F811 FAO); Volvo B10M-55/Alexander PS-types 20717/28/32/6/9/42/5/66/72/3/81/8 (K717 DAO etc); Dennis Lance/Plaxton Verdes 27201/3-12 (L201/3-11 YAG, L942 RJN), 27901-3 (N901-3 PFC); Volvo B6/Alexander Dash 30271-4 (L271-4 LHH), 30310/34 (M750 PRS, M734 BSJ); Mercedes-Benz 709Ds 40002/3 (N202/3 UHH), 40329 (N329 XRP), 40402/46 (N202 LFV, N446 VOD), 40619/50 (N619/50 VSS), 40823/34 (K623 UFR, L634 BFV); Volvo B10M/Plaxton driver trainers 52065/75



Left: Sleafordian Coaches YJ05 JWP, one of a pair of Optare Solos delivered for Lincolnshire County Council-supported Sleaford town services. ANDY IZATT

FLEET IN FOCUS

FLEET:	Chester City Transport trading as ChesterBus
BASED:	Station Road, Chester
FOUNDED:	1902 as Chester Corporation Tramways to take over the horse tram between the railway station and Saltney. Buses replaced the electrified tramway with the formation of Chester Corporation Transport in 1930. Became Chester City Transport in 1957 and a limited company 29 years later. The depot dates from 1878 and there are plans to move to more modern accommodation in Bumpers Land by 2006.
WHERE DOES IT OPERATE?:	The ChesterBus name and 11 core commercial routes within four zones replaced a 21-route operation from 4 April. The company has operated all four Chester park-&-ride contracts since November 2003. Also provides contract and school services, City Sightseeing tours, private hires, dial-a-ride and Chester Women's Safe Transport services.
LIVERY:	Maroon and cream is to be superseded by the low floor Blue Diamond blue and cream livery with the new ChesterBus name.
HOW MANY VEHICLES?:	78 double and single-deckers.
MOST INTERESTING VEHICLE?:	Pride of place must go to the undertaking's two preserved Guy Arabs, Massey-bodied MkIV 1 (RFM 641) which normally resides at the Wirral Transport Museum and Northern Counties-bodied MkV 47 (DFM 347H), the last Guy built for the home market. Four rare Marshall Minibuses include two new to Chester (repowered with four-cylinder Cummins Euro 3 engines) and two ex-Camden, West Kingsdown examples lengthened by supplying dealer B. & D. Holt, Bolton to accommodate Euro 2 Cummins 6BTA engines. Fleet also includes the UK's first eight BMC Falcons, some of the last Leyland Fleetlines operating with their original owner, Dennis Dominators and Leyland Olympians.

248 (P401 KAV), one of the lengthened Marshall Minibuses that were new to Camden, West Kingsdown. ANDY IZATT



The new ChesterBus fleetname on Plaxton Pointer-bodied Dennis Dart 63 (L63 SFM). JEFF TATTERSALL



(F135 URP, G386 PNV); stored ex-Stagecoach East London AEC Routemaster/Park Royal RML2429/70/88/95, 2592, 2748 (JJD 429/70/88/95, 592D, SMK 748F); and Iveco 49.10 service van 46602 (R602 KDD). Most of the Routemasters were sold on to Ensignbus (dealer), Purfleet.

Stagecoach South East ST

Three Northern Counties-bodied Volvos have been repainted in particularly special commemorative liveries. To mark the centenary of the start of the Hastings tramway system, B10M-55 20680 (R680 HCD) is maroon and cream with Hastings Tramway Company fleetnames, while similar 20654 (R654 HCD) is in Maidstone & District dark green/cream with traditional scrolls. Citybus double-decker 15202 (F302 MYJ) — one of 12 built for Southdown during its brief period as a management-owned company — is expected to receive traditional Southdown cream/green to mark the 90th anniversary of that much loved company.

DAF SB220LC550/Optare Delta DP36D driver trainer 26010 (G684 KNW) has been transferred from Stagecoach London. Volvo Olympian/Alexander H51/36F 16643 (P273 VPV) — part of a batch diverted from here to Ribble when new — has come from Stagecoach North West to replace similar Andover-based 16294 (R294 HCD), which is to become a permanent open-topper there after being deroofed here.

Leyland Olympian/ECW 14170 (C170 ECK) has gone to Stagecoach East Midlands for the Hull fleet, while Volvo B10M-62/Plaxton Premiere Interurban C51F 52480 (R180 DNH) has gone to Stagecoach Wales and B10M-62/Jonckheere Mistral C49Ft 52621 (S901 CCD) has gone to Stagecoach Cambridgeshire.

Dennis Dart/Alexander Dash 32541 (J541 GCD) has gone on loan to Norfolk Green (q.v.), replacing 32567 (K567 NHC), sold to Ensign (dealer), Purfleet.

Correcting the caption on p59 of *Buses* May, it showed Bristol VR 15762 (EWS 748W), which has been sold to the Stroud RE Group, Stroud for preservation; 15760 (JOU 160P) is the one retained here. Stagecoach West used both of them on the Cheltenham Gold Cup services.

Stagecoach Wales ST

New Neoplan Skyliner/CH65/26Ft 50133-5 (CN05 APV/X/Y) entered service at the end of March, supplemented by ex-Stagecoach Bluebird 50128 (SV54 ELJ), allowing Megabus tri-axle Leyland Olympians 13610/1 (JSK 492, OSK 784) to go to Stagecoach West and East Midland respectively.

Transfers from Stagecoach London are Dennis Dart SLF/Plaxton Pointer B27D 34144/5/53-5 (V153-5 MVX), which are being converted to single-door and repainted before use. Dart 34100 reverted to S210 WHK, ex-WLT 898, before leaving London.

Nine vehicles were written off in a fire at the former Phil Anslow depot at Pontnewydd, Pontypool in the early hours of 26 March, believed to have been arson. They were Volvo B10M/Van Hool 52016 (M135 SKY); B10M/Jonckheere 52019 (TJ1 4123, K61 BAX, TJ1 4124, K61 BAX), 52025 (M321 KRY); Leyland Tiger/Plaxton (TJ1 4124, F806 PSN, 8733 CD, F779 GNA); B10M/Plaxton 52221 (M35 LHP, A14 GOO, M35 LHP, HST 11) and UVG DP70F-bodied Dennis Javelins 59101/2 (M180/2 XHW). Leyland Titans 10602/65 (NUW 602/65Y) were severely damaged.

Besides the two Leyland Olympians reported last month, replacements from other Stagecoach fleets include three Volvo B10M-62s — Plaxton Expressliner C46Ft-bodied 52195 (LJY 145, L125 NAO) and C49Ft 52298 (N448 XVA) from East Midland and Plaxton Premiere Interurban C51F-bodied 52480 (R180 DNH) from South East.

Stagecoach Warwickshire ST

The expected Megabus.com CH65/24Ft Neoplan Skyliners are 50141/2 (KX05 HVE/F). Dennis Dart SLF/Alexander ALX200s 33351-6 (P801-6 NJN) are due from Stagecoach London.

Following school contract losses at Leamington, ECW-bodied Leyland Olympians 14369/73/5/7/8 (C119 CHM, D123/5/7/8 FYM) have been withdrawn and ex-Burnley & Pendle Volvo B10M-55/Alexander P-types 20401/2 (E61/2 JFV) and Mercedes-Benz 709D/Alexander 40142 (M402 LHP) are delicensed. Contract changes at Rugby see ECW-bodied Olympians

14942/3 (A942/3 HAC) set aside for disposal and thereby leaving 14932/44 (B912 ODU, A944 HAC) as the last ex-Midland Red buses in this fleet. However, Mercedes-Benz 811D/Wright NimBus 41505 (H405 MRW), due to be withdrawn at Rugby, has been transferred to Leamington to provide extra peak capacity.

Alexander-bodied 709D 40160 (N360 AVV) hasn't been withdrawn and is only partially in the old livery as the sides and rear are in a dark green contravision livery for Rugby-based estate agent Rose & Sergeant.

Stagecoach West ST

To cater for an increase in Gloucester city services and on routes to the Forest of Dean and west of Gloucester from 24 April, four additional Dennises were transferred to Cheltenham & Gloucester from Stagecoach London. These were Trident/Alexander ALX400 H51/22D 17060/1 (T660/1 KPU) and Dart SLF/Plaxton Pointer B31F (ex-B27D) 34144/5 (V144/5 MVX). The Tridents entered service in London red, still with two doors, but were fitted with Hanover electronic destination displays and are expected to be painted and lose their centre doors later in the year. The Darts were being painted in national livery and fitted with Hanover destinations before entering service.

Transferred from Stagecoach Wales to Swindon & District was another ex-Hong Kong Leyland Olympian/Alexander CH53/39Ft 13610 (JSK 492, EW 9698) for Megabus.com work. This replaced Volvo B10M/Plaxton 52298 (N448 XVA), which is among the vehicles listed above with Stagecoach Wales. Stagecoach Wales also lent B10M coach 52181 (L581 HSG) for a few days in March to assist on rail replacement work at Gloucester.

Cheltenham & Gloucester Volvo B6/Alexander 30712 (L712 FWO) and Swindon & District Mercedes Benz 709D/Alexander 40727 (N727 RDD) are delicensed. Dodge Commando driver trainer 48083 (HIL 6075) was re-registered W521 SWP before being sold to Bristol Bus & Coach (dealer).

GROUP CODES

AA

Arriva
Passenger
Services

BL

Blazefield
Holdings

DG

Comfort
Delgro

EB

Ensignbus

EY

EYMS
Group

FG

FirstGroup

GA

Go-Ahead
Group

NX

National
Express
Group

SG

Stabus
& Coach
Group

ST

Stagecoach
Group

TD

Transdev

TGM

Tellings -
Golden
Miller

WG

Wellglade
Group

YT

Traction
Group

Stephenson, Rochford, Essex

I understand that the company will not run Southend seafont service 67 this summer, thus ending open-top operation in the town. Open-top Leyland Olympian JFR 4W and Bristol VRT/SL3 UWV 618S were still owned in early spring (both illustrated in *Buses Focus* 35). Stephenson's took over operation of Tuesday/Thursday-only Chelmsford town service 44 (North Melbourne) from First Essex on from 14 March owing to continuing severe staff shortages.

On a literally brighter note, Leyland Olympians are appearing in an improved livery of light green roof/upper saloon windows and skirt, with green/yellow fleetnames and logos. Alexander-bodied C382/3 SAO are early recipients and have been noted working from Maldon, as has Stagecoach-liveried ECW C176 ECK, while ex-Lothian long wheelbase ECW-bodied B752 DFS has returned to Rochford.

ECW coach-bodied 100 (4475 WE), the ex-Mainline Motor Show exhibit Leyland Olympian, remains for sale.

Sullivan Buses, South Mimms

Two more AEC Routemasters, RML2428/9 (JJD 428/9D), have come from Ensignbus (dealer), Purfleet, along with former London Central Volvo Olympian/Northern Counties H47/27D NV106 (P906 RYO), the first of five for school work. RML2428 is ex-First London, while RML2429 is one of the Stagecoach buses damaged by flooding when stored at Carlisle.

Former Southlands Dennis Darts DRL2, 8, 14 (J602/8/14 XHL) have not been used and are expected to go to Nu Venture, Aylesford.

Supertravel, Speke

Optare Solo MX54 KYJ is in use. Former Shearings Volvo B10M/Van Hool P811 GBA is also here.

Swanbrook, Cheltenham

Volvo B10M/Plaxton Paramount UJ1 1761 has returned from Blackpool Coach Services after refurbishment with Setra-style side mouldings. After an unfortunate accident with security devices at CHQH Benhall, the future of Volvo E325 PMD is under review.

Excel R300 PAR is the last Optare painted in the new mint green livery with purple stripe. Vehicles sold are UVG-bodied Dennis Dart R12 SBK, pre-production Optare Excels N202/5 LCK (to Cumfy Bus) and minibus W415 HOB.

Tanat Valley, Llanrhaedr-ym

Leyland Olympian 516 (TSO 16X) has been sold for preservation in Scotland — it is planned to return it to Northern Scottish livery.

Thames Travel, Wallingford

The pink livery on new Scania OmniDekka 154 (OU54 PGZ) advertises Abingdon Witney College.

TLC Travel, West Bowling, Bradford

Another Optare Solo here is SlimLine MX54 KYK. Further Solos are due to replace Aleros.

TM Travel, Staveley, Derbyshire

Volvo B12M/Plaxton Paragon C51F1 YN05 HVT was launched at the UK Coach Rally in Brighton and an East Lancs Millennium B41F-bodied Alexander Dennis Dart is due for June delivery.

BMC Falcon 1100LF/B40F demonstrator YN54 VLE has been tried. Acquisitions are Mercedes Vario O814D/Plaxton Cheetah C33F W551 BHG, new to Hodson, Clitheroe and refurbished by Plaxton before delivery here in cream/maroon/red livery, and, acquired from Ensign (dealer), Purfleet, ex-Nottingham Leyland Olympian/East Lancs H49/35F K482 GNN.

UVG-bodied Dennis Dart R83 GNW has been painted in overall all-red bus livery.

Town Lynx Buses, St Helens

This new operation began on 14 March with route 120 (St Helens Bus Station-Haydock Piele Road estate), using Renault S75/Wright Nimbus B31F 1 (HDZ 5411) from Pugh, St Helens (new to London Buses as RW11), Optare MetroRider MR15/B30F 2 (M216 TNU) from Blue Bus, Bolton but still in South Notts livery, to which it was new, and MR37/B25F 3 (M405 TCK) from Preston Bus. Fleet livery is orange with black skirt. A Merseytravel school contract in Newton-le-Willows has also been added.



Above: Thames Travel 154 (OU54 PGZ), the new pink liveried East Lancs-bodied Scania OmniDekka, in Oxford in April. **DAVID BARROW**

Acquired for spares is Renault S75 HDZ 5448 from Springfield of Wigan. Former Preston Renault-Dodge S56/Northern Counties E77 LNR is also owned but stored at the premises of Nomad Travel, Earlestown and the company hopes to preserve it in the near future.

Thanks go to Town Lynx partner Jason G. J. Hartley for news of his fleet.

Trathens, Plymouth

New in March were Volvo B12B/Jonckheere C49Ft HSK 646-50.

Travellers Choice, Carnforth

Two Esker C39F-bodied Mercedes-Benz L1127Ls are on order and Volvo B7R/Sunsundegui C47F PJ54 EHUV are in use. Volvos due for disposal are Jonckheere-bodied L210/1/3 GJO, Duple-bodied YFG 333, Van Hool-bodied 824 HAO, Plaxton-bodied 3770 RU and Caetano-bodied OET 309.

Travel West Midlands NX

MCW Metrobus 2901 (C901 FON) has been reinstated at Lea Hall, 3067/91 (F67, 91 XOF) at Wolverhampton. Leyland Lynx 1096 (G96 EOG) has become driver trainer 9096. Metrobus 2958 (D958 NDA) has been noted in training use and has had its staircase removed but has not so far received a 9xxx fleetnumber.

Withdrawn are Lynx 1156 (G156 EOG) and Metrobuses 2669/81 (A669/81 UOE), 2701/62/871/93, (A701 UOE, A762/871 WVP, B793 AOC) and 2822 (B822 AOP). Metrobuses 2467/84, 2510, 2831/46/82 (NOA 467X, POG 484, 510Y, B831/46 AOP, B882 DOM) have been sold; 2870 (B870 DOM) is with Centrebus, Leicester, 2913 (D913 NDA) with Huggins & Simmons, Wallasey.

Trent Barton WG

One of the new buses has been named *Howard Ellis*, after a man who believed that we take for granted people providing essential services. Drivers knew him as a cheerful chap with a kindly word for them. Trent Barton

Below: Weavaway OU05 AVY, the third of the 102-seat East Lancs-bodied Volvo B9TL schoolbuses, awaiting its registration plate and entry into service. One of the company's ex-Hong Kong Duple Metsec-bodied Dennis Condors is alongside. **DES FEDRICK**



Weavaway, Newbury

The five remarkable new three-axle Volvo B9TL/East Lancs Myllennium Nordic CH63/39F have arrived; noted so far are OU05 AVB/D/Y, AWJ, the first of their kind in the UK, in all silver.

West, Birmingham

The rather brief fleetname of 'West' appears on re-registered Dennis Dart 8.5SDL Duple or Carlyle Dartline 481 EXO, in a red livery.

Western Greyhound, Newquay

The new Mercedes-Benz Vario O814D/Plaxton Beaver DP33F are 570-2 (WK05 CFD-F).

W&H Motors, Crawley

New are Volvo B12B/Sunsundegui Sideral C49Ft FJ05 AOG/H.

Whippet, Fenstanton

Volvo B6/Alexander Dash L456 YAC and L664 MSF are acquisitions from Ensignbus, which used them on its service X80. L456 YAC is branded for service 1 (St Ives-Cambridge).

The company has moved its St Neots outstation from the Alington Road Industrial Estate, Little Barford to a former petrol station on the A428 at Croxton and three single-deckers are kept there. Huntingdon & District still keeps two buses at Alington Road, but Stagecoach no longer uses it.

Leyland Titan OHV 813Y has been withdrawn after being struck by a falling telegraph pole, fortunately when the bus was empty. After 22 years' operation, the last DAF has been withdrawn, Duple-bodied A807 REW served here for just over 20 of those years. It has passed to Eric Graveling, Peterborough with DAFs FEW 224/7Y, also bought new.

Wilfreda Beehive, Adwick-le-Street, S. Yorks

New for the Airport Arrow service between Doncaster and the new Doncaster/Sheffield Robin Hood Airport at Finningley, is DP36F Optare Tempo YJ05 XOO.

Wilts & Dorset GA

Further Volvo B7TL/East Lancs Myllennium Vyking CO49/29F convertible open-toppers are 408-13 (HF05 GGO/P/U/N/X/Y).

Windsorian, Windsor

New is Alexander Dennis Javelin/Plaxton Prima AL05 ASH.

Winson, Loughborough

Two new Alexander Dennis Mini Pointer Darts are CW/DW05 PSW for route 4 (Loughborough-Shephed).

Woodside, Sheffield

A most unusual addition here is HX54 CEV, a Polish-built Autosan A0909L Tramp yellow schoolbus, which carries S-Kool Bus lettering.

White Leyland National Greenway TIB 4873 is here and Dennis Dart/Wright Handybus J942 MFT is understood acquired via auction. Plaxton-bodied Scania HSK 845 (G41 HKY) has been sold to PC Coaches, Lincoln.

Yellow Buses, Bournemouth

Despite the sale process, new vehicles continue to arrive. Volvo B7TL/East Lancs Myllennium Vyking H76F 113-5 (HF05 HNA-C) have been delivered, with the three new VDL SB120/Wright Cadet midibuses expected for service 6, which is to revert to a 15min headway.

As illustrated last month, convertible Leyland Fleetlines 138/40 are in a revised livery for route 12, which began running at Easter; 140 was used lately on West Moors Middle School and Tesco contracts, along with Fleetline 176.

Yorkshire Terrier YT

The cannibalised remains of Leyland National 2s 2091/4 (A304 JFA, A139 FDC) had been removed from Holbrook, leaving just one National, 2099 (EDT 219V), under cannibalisation to provide parts for driver trainer T70 (LUA 323V).

Yorkshire Traction YT

Ikarus-bodied MAN 18.220 demonstrator YN54 CNE has temporary fleetnumber 601.

101 (YN05 WDX) is one of four Metro-owned Mybus BMC 1100FE schoolbuses at Shafton depot for routes to Hemsworth High School and some junior schools in West Yorkshire.

Dennis Dart 444 (K9 YTB) is in service at Barnsley. Optare MetroRiders 363/8 (N213/8 VRC) have been

withdrawn. Wright-bodied Dennis Dart 414 has suffered significant front-end damage in a collision.

Volvo B10M-62/Plaxton 63 (2524 HE) has reverted to original registration R763 XWG and is to go back to Plaxton, Anston (dealer) in part exchange for a new coach.

ECW-bodied Leyland Olympians 623/66 (SHE 623Y, B666 EWE) are licensed, 643 (A643 WDT) withdrawn for disposal. 636/7 (A636/7 WDT) have been sold to PVS, Carlton (dealer) for scrap and 622 (A622 WDT) has been sold to Ensign (dealer), Purfleet.

Having been reported as an abandoned conversion, I'm now told that former Road Car Leyland Atlantean/East Lancs recovery vehicle RV2 (VCX 340X) has been cut down and finished at Rawmarsh, where it has been allocated. Leyland National 251 (OHL 251X) is to become a driver trainer-cum-towing vehicle at Doncaster to replace Leyland Leopard L7, likely to be sold for preservation.

Zak's, Birmingham

Dennis Dart/Duple Dartline G227 VWS is here, as are much newer Dennis/Plaxton Mini Pointer Dart/B29F KP02 PUV/X.

Zara Travel, Smethwick

This new West Midlands operator has ex-Metroline MAN 11.180HOC/Marshall C37 B40F 130 (N130 XEB).

ISLE OF MAN

Isle of Man Transport

On order are three VDL DB250s and two Alexander Dennis Tridents, and one narrow Alexander Dennis Dart, all with East Lancs bodies.

Ex-Merseyside PTE Leyland Atlanteans 53 and 76 (MAN 1380, 5623, XKC 829/36K), for many years used as race control towers at Castletown, have been scrapped, while 49 (MAN 2134, XKC 855K) has gone from Bushy's Brewery to Rambo's scrapyard, Douglas.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Thanks from me on behalf of readers to each of the following for giving your time to contribute to my columns:

N. Ames, John Angell, G. W. Atkinson, Andrew Babbs, Andrew Bagshaw, Chris Barker, Harry L. Barker, R. W. Barrett, Michael Bewes, Lance Blackman, Kenneth Bladon, British Bus Publishing, British Trolleybus Society, Bus Fare, Cambridge Omnibus Society, Cambus, Roger Carey, Steve Chapman, John Child, Andrew P. Churchill, Jeff Clayton, Brian Corey, Gary Conn, Chris Corroy, Richard Cranmer, Darren J. Critchley, Crosville Enthusiasts Club, Cumbria Transport Society, Anthony Dee, Peter Dew, Nigel Diplock, Richard Dodge, Julian Dolman, Ensignbus, Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group, Essex Bus News, Matthew Evans, Ian Francis, Fyde Tramway Society, Wesley Goodwin, Greater Manchester Transport Society, Peter Guppy, Robin Hadfield, Halifax Joint Committee, Andrew Halliday, John Hammond, Dave Harries, Jason G. J. Hartley, Paul N. Hill, Chris Hinds, Tony F. Hunter, Christian Jakovljevic, Paul D. Johnson, The Journal, David Jukes, Chris King, Steven Knight, Lancaster & Morecambe PSV Society, K-Line Travel, Lincolnshire and East Yorkshire Transport Review, London Omnibus Traction Society, Christopher Lowe, M&D and East Kent Bus Club, M&T News, Metroline, Geoff Mills, Ian Moorcroft, Geoff Nelson, Ross Newman, Simon Nicholas, Mark Nichols, Billy Nicol, David A. Noddings, Northern Group Enthusiasts Club, Brendan O'Reilly, Oxford & Chiltern Bus Pages (www.oxford-chiltern-bus-page.co.uk), PSV Circle, Graeme Palmer, Deric Pemberton, Mike Pensom, James Penton, Bob Perrin, John Podgorski, T. S. Powell, H. Powell, Aiden Proctor, Paul Redfern, Regal Busways, Ribble Enthusiasts Club, Graham Richardson, Andy Rigby, Road Car, M. G. Robins, Rossendale Transport, Dave Russell, Phil Shafe, Norman Sharrock, Sheffield Omnibus Enthusiasts Society, Adrian C. Small, R. G. Smith, Paul Southall, Southdown Enthusiasts Club, Eric Speckman, Alan Spencer, Staffordshire Bus Enthusiasts Group, Stagecoach East Midlands, Stagecoach Manchester, Stagecoach Transit, Stagecoach Warwickshire, Stagecoach West, David Stanier, Chris Stewart, Mike Stone, Karl Sutton, John Taylor, Dave B. Thomas, Steve Thompson, Nick Thomson, Town Lynx Buses, Transpire — The Chesterfield Bus Society, United Enthusiasts Club, J. Watson, Michael P. Webster, Wessex bi-monthly Transport Review, Wessex Transport Society, West Yorkshire Information Service, West Yorkshire Metro Transport News, Wheels, Lee Whitehead, Steve White's website (spw24.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk), Dave Wilder, Trystan Williams, Wilts & Dorset, John Young, Jim Young.

THE COACHPARC

In 1987 Kirkby, the Plaxton-owned dealer, sought an alternative body to offer on the Volvo B10M and began an exclusive arrangement to import the Hungarian-built Ikarus Blue Danube that Ikarus, then the world's largest bus and coach supplier, built on a variety of chassis. Kirkby offered two versions — the lower floor 336 and the impressive looking high-floor 358.

It imported 101, of which 27 were 336s. Although it took a while, Kirkby sold them to a wide range of operators including Wallace Arnold, Bere Regis, Hills of Tredegar and McLean's of Witney. Thames Transit became a big fan, buying new and used examples for use on the punishing Oxford Tube services. It must be remembered that the coach market was in turmoil during this period and it was not until August 1992 that the last pair, built in 1989, was sold bearing K-registrations.

Ikarus coaches returned to the UK in 1996 when Hughes DAF, which had been selling Ikarus-bodied DAF SB220 buses since 1990, offered a slightly restyled version of the high and low Blue Danube — known respectively as the 350 and 396 — as a low cost offering on the SB3000WS chassis.

It was a little more successful than the Volvo, with 110 entering service between 1996 and 2001. The most enthusiastic customer was London Coaches (Kent), which took 34.

But that is not the end of the story. A few of the Volvos were exported to Ireland, where they were

In his second quarterly look at coaches sold in the British Isles, **JAMES PRINCE** describes the Ikarus offerings

joined by 14 further Blue Danubes on Scania K-series chassis for the associated Kavanagh fleets of Tipperary. Ten were delivered in 1990, the other four in 1992.

Although Ikarus is no more, memories of the Blue Danube can be detected in the BMC Probus midicoach, which incorporates such Ikarus styling cues as the distinctive side windows and rear end.

Above right: One of the Blue Danube 358-bodied Volvo B10Ms exported to Ireland in Dublin in 1999.

Right: N76 FWU, an Ikarus 350-bodied DAF SB3000WS of Fourway Coaches of Leeds, at Sandbach services on the M6.



GROUP CODES

AA

Arriva
Passenger
Services

BL

Blazefield
Holdings

DG

Comfort
Delgro

EB

Ensignbus

EY

EYMS
Group

FG

FirstGroup

GA

Go-Ahead
Group

NX

National
Express
Group

SG

Staus Bus
& Coach
Group

ST

Stagecoach
Group

TD

Transdev

TGM

Tellings -
Golden
Miller

WG

Wellglade
Group

YT

Traction
Group

Scottish reports should be sent, please, to: **Sandy Macdonald, 12 Morton Gardens, Maxwell Park, Glasgow, G41 4AF** to reach him by **15 June** for the **August** issue.

Allan, Gorebridge

Irizar C48Ft-bodied Scania K124IB4s B15/7 DWA were new in January.

Irizar Intercentury-bodied Scania K114IB4s B13-5/7 DWA were re-registered SN53 RWF, RXC-E respectively in January before being sold to Scania (dealer), Worksop.

Other re-registrations at that time involved Scania K124IB4s B11/2 DWA becoming B13/4 DWA and Sitcar Beluga-bodied Mercedes-Benz O815D C9 DWA (SJ51 FHV) being given back its original registration.

Allander, Milngavie

Two new Jonckheere Millennium Mistral 50-bodied Volvo B12M coaches are due.

C53F-seated Bova Futura FLC12-280 AT82 (M784 RVY, 77 RTO, M784 RTY) was acquired last November ex-Nottingham City Coaches 797, and re-registered 8578 AT in January.

Further to the November issue, Jonckheere-bodied Volvo B10M-62s Y176/8 KCS (LSK 444, 555) are numbered AT80, 79 respectively and not the other way round.

Plaxton Profile-bodied Volvo B7R AT62 (SF03 ACJ) was re-registered 3786 AT in December, when Van Hool Alizée-bodied Volvo B10M-55s AT47 (9237 AT, Y624 TYS) and AT48 (9446 AT, Y633 TYS) were given back their original registrations before sale to Volvo Bus & Coach (dealer), Loughborough. Plaxton C70F-bodied Dennis Javelin AT68 (XIB 3473, K750 UJO) passed to Lewis, Hindley last October.

Arriva Scotland West AA

Further vehicles on loan at Inchinnan depot during March comprised Arriva North East B29F-seated Dennis/Plaxton Mini Pointer Darts 1726/49 (V726 DNL, V749 ECU) and Wright Cadet B39F-bodied DAF SB120CS 1918/9 (W78/9 PRG).

Owing to continuing strike action, Glasgow Subway Partick-Govan and Shields Road-St Enoch replacement services were operated on behalf of Strathclyde Passenger Transport on 7, 15/16, 23 April, using six East Lancs-bodied Volvo Citybuses.

Service changes from 3 May included alteration of 17 (Glasgow-Largs via Partick and Paisley) to operate in two overlapping sections, 17 (Glasgow-Sparteston via Partick) and 18 (Largs-Braehead shopping centre via Beith and Paisley).

Austin, Earlstoun

This firm took delivery in April of two Plaxton Panther C48Ft-bodied Volvo B12B coaches; YN05 UUY/Z are in Austin Travel and Scotline livery respectively.

Hispano-bodied Mercedes-Benz O404 USU 643 (Y369 UOM) was given back its original registration in October before sale to Ferguson (dealer), East Whitburn. This allowed Bova Futura FHD14-430 SN03 TKF to become USU 643 at that time.

Hispano-bodied Mercedes-Benz O404 X435 KON (KNL 665, X435 KON) had passed to Graham, Kilkeel by February.

Avondale, Clydebank

One of this company's services between Drumchapel Shopping Centre and Clydebank, 31A via South Drumry, was cancelled from 12 May. From 19 May, service 400 (Drumchapel rail station-George Square) was revised to operate between Drumchapel and Partick bus stance only.

Bain, Oldmeldrum

UVG B27F-bodied Mercedes-Benz Vario O810Ds R18/9 BLU were acquired in August last year ex-Bluebird, Middleton 18/9.

Blue Bus, Shotts

Former Stagecoach Alexander Sprint B25F-bodied Mercedes-Benz 709Ds L630/5 BFV had been acquired by April.

Right: Coakley, Motherwell has recently taken delivery of four TransBus Pointer Darts, its first new buses for several years. Like the others, SF05 LFV was built last year for Cardiff Bus, which changed its specification before they could be delivered.

MURDOCH CURRIE

SCOTTISH COLUMN

**SANDY
MACDONALD**



Brown, Edinburgh

New Van Hool Alizée T9-bodied Volvo B12M SN05 FLD and similar Berkhof Axial-bodied FJ05 AOS had both joined this fleet by April.

Browning, Whitburn

Van Hool Alizée-bodied Volvo B10Ms MIL 3723/4 (M433/7 ECS, KSK 948/76) were sold to Reay, Wigton last September.

Bryans, Denny

New Alexander Dennis Mini Pointer Dart SN05 FLR had been purchased by April for use on Falkirk Council EasyBoarder service E1 (Whitecross-Falkirk), as well as associated workings on services E2, E5 and E43.

Bull, Sollas

Cymric-bodied Mercedes-Benz 614D CU51 EFA passed to Aston, Worcester last September.

Canavan, Kilsyth

Plaxton Beaver B27F-bodied Mercedes-Benz 711D L656 MYG was acquired in March ex-Henderson, Hamilton.

CC Travel, Paisley

This company's service was amended from 13 April to operate between Phoenix Park and Gallowhill via Ferguslie Park.

Clyde Coast, Ardrossan

Bova Futura FHD12-370 W4 GLF was sold to Volvo Bus & Coach (dealer), Loughborough last June.

Coakley, Motherwell

The new Alexander Dennis Pointer Darts mentioned last month entered service in April as SF05 LFT-W.

Carlyle Dartline-bodied Dennis Dart H923 LOX had the last of its useful parts removed and been scrapped by March.

Service 1 (Motherwell town centre-Wishaw, Pather via Muirhouse) started last December, was cancelled with effect from 30 May but the route to Pather is being continued by an extension of service 61. Service 109 has been converted into circular 107 clockwise/109 anti-clockwise, linking Motherwell, Holytown, Bellshill, Birkenshaw, Uddingston, Hamilton and Motherwell.

Critchley, Tighnabruaich

Argyll & Bute Council service 478 (Portavadie-Kames-Tighnabruaich) was registered to operate from 3 April.

Cumbrae, Millport

A most unusual vehicle on loan to this operator for a few days from 24 March was B44F-seated Irisbus Agora Line demonstrator OW03 FXG.

Davies, Plean

Caetano-bodied Volvo B10M-62 R189 LBC (VFW 721, R189 LBC) passed to Harlequin, Dunblane in February.

Davies, Tobermory

Service 495A (Tobermory-Craigunure) was cancelled from 25 March.

Dearman, Alness

YJ04 CCW is the Optare Solo acquired for the Inverness-Durness service, mentioned in Scottish Column.



Solo cycling in the Highlands

The Highland Cycle Bus, using a low-floor Optare Solo and a 12-bike trailer, was launched in April between Inverness and Smoo Cave, Durness in north-west Sutherland — as far north west as you can get by public roads on the Scottish mainland.

Tim Dearman Coaches of Ardross has been operating the Highland Council-funded Inverness-Durness route for five years and has introduced the cycle bus in response to demand from his passengers. He says: 'Cycling is a growing holiday activity and the scenic north and west Highlands are popular destinations. Our service will be ideal for those people who are heading to the north or to the Western Isles via Ullapool, or just fancy a day's cycling in the Highlands.'

The service departs from Inverness bus station at 08.50, stopping at Dingwall, Strathpeffer, Contin, Ullapool, Lochinver, Scourie and Kinlochbervie, and arrives back in Inverness at 19.30. It operates on Mondays to Saturdays from April to September with an additional Sunday journey in July and August. Hitrans has provided capital funding for the trailer and part-funding for the bus, which is equipped with closed-circuit television to help the driver monitor the loading and unloading of bikes.

Integration between bike and bus and train will be further bolstered in time for the summer season through three further Hitrans projects introduced with private sector partners.

With Rapson's Coaches, services between Grantown, Aviemore and Cairngorm Mountain Resort will be upgraded with the introduction of three new buses (two of which will be Solos) capable of carrying bikes on special

racks and the installation of a bike rack on an existing bus. With Murdo MacDonald on Skye, the Fiscavaig-Portree service will be upgraded with the introduction of a Solo fitted with a bike rack.

Hitrans chairman Cllr Charles King says: 'We recognise the value of cycling both in terms of the economic benefits derived from cycle tourism and also the obvious health benefits and are pleased that this will open up more of the Highlands and Islands to cyclists.'

Public inquiry for CC Travel after only two weeks

Paisley-based CC Travel — owned by a Mr Carter — was investigated for poor time keeping and management in its second week of operation, a public inquiry in Edinburgh heard.

A six-day monitoring exercise last November revealed that, out of the 88 journeys checked on its eight-vehicle Braehead Shopping Centre-Paisley Cross-Spateston service, 15 were either 1min early or 5min late, two were unregistered short workings and 46 failed to turn up. In other words, 72% of services failed to comply with the company's schedule of one bus every 10min.

One of the bus monitors recalled not seeing any buses for 30min at one point, and then saw two sitting together at a bus stop. He said: 'It was unlikely that either of these vehicles had even completed the proper route. I was expecting to see 46 journeys and they simply didn't operate.'

CC Travel ran a variety of different coloured 25-seaters in the first few weeks of business. The red

buses and blue and white coaches did not have matching livery and lettering and Mr Carter's representative suggested that these factors would make them hard to identify. But traffic commissioner Joan Aitken said that this was an invalid point as the 'public riding the buses would also have to identify them'.

Mr Carter's representative also said that on the day before Mr Carter started the service, he was refused permission to use the Braehead bus station as a terminus. Drivers had to change their route, making timekeeping a problem.

Problems with the newly installed ticket machines led to the two unregistered short workings. A shortage of drivers — Mr Carter was down to six in the second week — meant he was unable to monitor the service.

He told the commissioner: 'I know all my buses were out on these days. They went out at six in the morning and came back at six in the evening but, because of a driver shortage, I wasn't able to go out and regulate them.'

Mr Carter, a driver of 13 years' experience who previously worked for Hutchison's of Renfrew, told Ms Aitken that he 'loved his job' and it was 'all he ever wanted to do'. She commented: 'I have been to Paisley. It's not short of bus operators. Why make a living out of it? There is clearly a big jump from driving a bus to running a bus company.' In response to her asking: 'Did you ask anyone to give you help in preparation?', he said: 'Nobody gave me a hand to do nothing.'

She will issue a written decision on the case which, she says, 'demands a penalty'.

Deveron, Macduff

Van Hool Alizée-bodied Scania K92CRB F101 CWG had been sold to Volvo Bus & Coach (dealer), Loughborough by last October and Made to Measure-bodied Mercedes-Benz 609D J9 JPT passed to Perry, Bromyard in November.

Dickson, Paisley

Wadham Stringer Wessex II B33F-bodied Mercedes-Benz 811D N744 LUS was acquired in June last year ex-Nottingham City Transport 144.

DJ International, Barrhead

Jonckheere C51Ft-bodied Volvo B10M-62 N540 FJC (VLT 293, N2 VLT) was acquired in March last year ex-Vale of Llangollen, Cefn Mawr.

Docherty, Irvine

C49Ft-seated Setra S315GT W513 XDS was being used by this operator by last October, ex-Prestige Tours, Renfrew.

Bova Futura FHD12-340s T342/3 NBV, SA02 UEP, SF03 AVM were re-registered C2 CHT, C3 CHT, 4151 D and ED 3417 respectively in February. C2, 3 CHT were repainted into Scottish Coaches blue and white in February.

Northern Counties-bodied Leyland Atlantean AN68A/1R MVO 420W and MCW Metrobus DR104/12s B927/31 CDT were sold to Wigley (dealer), Carlton in March.

Doig, Glasgow

More new vehicles added to this fleet in March were Sunsundegui Sideral-bodied Volvo B12M FJ05 ANX and KVC M16-bodied Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 413Cdi SN05 FCF.

Donaldson, St Andrews

Previously reported under the North Fife Travel heading, this operator has Unvi Esker-bodied Mercedes-Benz Atego 1223L SN05 DJK, which was new in March.

Dumfries & Galloway Council

Plaxton Beaver 2 B27F-bodied Mercedes-Benz Vario O814Ds P540/2 PNE had been added to this fleet by March, ex-Stagecoach Manchester 42540/2.

Edinburgh Castle, Edinburgh

The first visible sign of the Edinburgh Castle Coaches/Silver Coach Lines merger is the introduction of an Edinburgh Coach Lines fleetname.

Essbee, Coatbridge

New Essbee C24F-bodied Mercedes-Benz Vario O814D

21 (SF05 KWE) had joined this fleet by April, and is white with red stripes.

Essbee-bodied Mercedes-Benz Sprinters 4 (SA52 AXB), 7 (SF53 MJJ) were sold to Vaughan, Tibshelf by September 2003 and Hamilton, Strensall in April last year respectively.

EVE Coaches, Dunbar

Van Hool-bodied Volvo B10M-60 GSU 370 (K811 HUM) was given back its original registration in December, allowing Northern Counties-bodied Volvo Citybus G109 NGN to become GSU 370.

Fairline, Glasgow

C49Ft-seated Bova Futura FHD12-370 W154 RYB joined this fleet last November ex-Bailey, Biddisham.

Similar FHD12-280 T280 TSF, which was also acquired at that time, was re-registered GSO 84V upon arrival.

Jonckheere-bodied Volvo B10M-62 XIW 1184 (M303 KRY) was sold to Moseley (dealer), Wellington in November.

Fereneze, Paisley

From 20 April, service 64 (Linwood, Phoenix Park-Paisley town centre via Ferguslie Park) was extended eastwards to Gallowhill.

First Edinburgh FG

The first of the new East Lancs H47/33F-bodied Scania

N94UD OmniDekkas reported in use from Livingston depot on services 27/28 (Edinburgh-Bathgate) were 36007/8/10/11/3/4 (SN05 HWW/X/Z, HXA, HWL/K), which arrived earlier than expected, in April.

Alexander H47/32F-bodied Volvo Olympians 31439-42 (N950-3 SOS) were transferred to this fleet in January from First Glasgow and were followed by ECW DPH45/28F-bodied Leyland Olympian ONTL11/2Rsp 31244 (C212 UPD) and similar DPH45/24F-bodied 31245 (C215 UPD) in April. 38084/9/92/3 (F84 XBD, H289/92/3 VRP) are Alexander DP47/35F-bodied Volvo Citybus B10M-50s which arrived in April from First Northampton. Their upper decks have bus seats and the lower have coach seating. They have been allocated to Dalkeith, Livingston, Galashiels and Dalkeith respectively.

Plaxton-bodied Dennis Javelins 62270 (KSU 390, M293 FAE), 62378/9 (A15, 20 SMT, N473/4 KHU) had been given back their original registrations by March.

Optare MetroRider MR03 50428 (K513 BSX) had left the fleet by March.

First Glasgow FG

Marshall Capital B22D-bodied Dennis Dart SLF 41208/12/28 [MD139/4/44] (R208/12/28 TLM) had been received from First London by March. Northern Counties Paladin B39F-bodied Volvo B6 48025 [MV50] (L5 GML) arrived in April from First Leicester and has been allocated to Motherwell.

continued overleaf...

Below: Twenty-two new East Lancs-bodied Scania OmniDekkas — including 36011 (SN05 HXA) — are the first low-floor double-deckers for First Edinburgh, which is using them to upgrade routes linking Edinburgh and West Lothian. DANE MURDOCH



Dennis Dart SLFs 41202/3/5/7/9/10/7-9/21-4/6/7 (R202/3/5/7/9/10/7-9/21, 322, 223/4/6/7 TLM) have been given local fleetnumbers MD132/3/43/36/5/26/42/3/27/8, 131/29/40/37/30, and new Alexander Dennis Pointer Darts 42877-88 have local fleetnumbers MD200-11. 41207/8/9/12/9/28 have been allocated to Dumbarton depot and 41202/3/5/18/22-4/6 to Motherwell.

All of the ex-First London Dennis Darts in service have been repainted into corporate livery, while other recent recipients of these colours include Volvo Ailsa 31221 (as illustrated last month) and another First Ayrshire Dennis Dart, 40743.

Further to last month's report Alexander O45/29D-bodied Leyland Atlantean AN68A/1R 39903 (HRS 271V) was transferred to this fleet from First Devon & Cornwall in February, was allocated to Larkfield depot and given local fleetnumber LA5. Alexander-bodied Volvo Olympians transferred to other group companies in January comprised 31439-42 [VO50-3] (N950-3 SOS) to First Edinburgh; 31456/62 [VO67, 73] (N967/73 SOS) to First Essex; 31457-61 [VO68-72] (N968-72 SOS) to First Devon & Cornwall; and coach-seated 31518/9/22 [CO247/9/8] (WLT 677/8, 910, M847/9/8 DUS) to First Potteries. ECW-bodied Leyland Olympians 31244 [LO103] and 31245 [CO57] (C212/5 UPD) were transferred to First Edinburgh in April.

A fleet allocation for 14 April shows only 14 Ailsas still in service — 31196 (B21 YYS), 31212-6/9-21/3-6/34 (A733/5/6/7/41 PSU, B24/6/7, 30/1/3/4 YYS, B999 YUS) — all at Scotstoun. It also shows only eight Leyland Tigers — 61308/11/22/7/33-5/9 (A30/9 VDS, B255/60 BYS, D371/4/6/81 OSU) — at Cumbernauld and Motherwell, with 61307/9/10/3/5/9/21/3/4 (A26, 31/3 VDS, B245/7/52/4/6/7 BYS) held in reserve.

Vehicles listed for disposal at the same time were Northern Counties H43/30F-bodied Leyland Olympian ONLXB/1Rs 30158/60 (C206/11 CBU) and 30538 (B71 PJA); Alexander H44/35F-bodied Volvo Ailsas 31202-5 (A562-4/8 SGA), 31218 (B23 YYS), 31359/60/7/69-71 (KGG 116/8/34/8-40Y), 31464-6 (OGG 186/8/9Y), 31626/7 (HSF 86, 91X) and 31736 (B158 GSC); Alexander DP47/27F-bodied Leyland Olympian ONLXB/1RHs 31247/8/52 (C801/2/6 KHS); Alexander DP45/33F-bodied MCW Metrobus DR102/52 31261 (D677 MHS); MCW H46/31F-bodied Metrobus DR102/72 31286 (G391 OGD); Alexander B23F-bodied Mercedes-Benz 709Ds 50403/4 (K401/3 HRS); and Alexander B53F-bodied Leyland Tiger TRBLXB/2RHs 61312/4-6/8/25/6/9 (B244/6/7/9/51/8/9/63 BYS) and 61336/7 (D378/9 OSU).

Also in reserve are Northern Counties-bodied Dennis Dominators 31334/6/42 (H265/7/74 KVX).

Dumbarton local service 208 (Brucehill-Silverton) was renumbered 228 from 1 April. A substantial package of service changes being implemented from 29 May includes the complete withdrawal of X7 (Kilmacolm-Glasgow).

Gibson, Renfrew

Plaxton Pointer-bodied Dennis Dart SLF S461 LGN had passed to Irvine, Law by March.

Gillen, Port Glasgow

Service 306 (Paisley Cross or Johnstone Centre and Howwood) has been registered to start on 20 June, replacing the similar service operated by Reliable, Johnstone.

Glasgow Citybus

UVG-bodied Dennis Dart R551 UOT was added to this fleet in April ex-K-Line, Huddersfield and entered service in full K-Line livery owing to a shortage of vehicles. A further addition at that time was H114 MOB, a Carlyle Dartline-bodied Dennis Dart owned previously by Rossendale Transport.

Wright Cadet-bodied VDL 120 YJ04 HUU has been repainted into full fleet livery ex-allover white.

Hall, Kennoway

C49Ft-seated Mercedes-Benz O303/15R MIW 4842 (D641 AJF) joined this fleet in January, ex-Smith, Corby Glen.

Harlequin, Dunblane

Additions to this fleet in February comprised Elme C35DL-bodied Leyland Swift LBM6T/2RS F492 ENE ex-Hamilton, Falkirk and Caetano C49F-bodied Volvo B10M-62 R189 LBC (VFW 721, R189 LBC) ex-Davies, Plean.

The registrations for the Balfon-Spring Kerse Retail Park, C44 (Stirling Royal Infirmary-Plean), C48 (Stirling bus station-Braco), C75 (Stirling Royal Infirmary-Throsk)

and H31 (Stirling rail station-Crieff) were all cancelled from 22 March.

Harris, Tarbert

Plaxton-bodied Volvo B10M-56 H32 (A101 JVT) was sold in March.

Harte, Greenock

Service HB2 (Greenock town centre-Burns Square via Auchmead Road), introduced on 24 January in response to the Wilson's Coaches Greenock-Braehead service, is to be cancelled on 19 June. From April onwards, however, Wilson operated it on behalf of this company.

Henderson, Hamilton

The latest Optare Solos to join this fleet, B29F-seated 105, 205 (YJ05 XOS/T), were delivered in April in Strathclyde Passenger Transport livery.

Alexander (Belfast) B25F-bodied Mercedes-Benz 709D L748 LWA was hired from Blythwood (dealer), Glasgow at the end of March and was expected to stay in the fleet for a month or so.

Plaxton-bodied Mercedes-Benz 711D L656 MYG, Alexander Sprint-bodied Mercedes-Benz 709D M304 TSF and Optare MetroRider MR15 N223 VRC were all sold in March, with L656 MYG passing to Canavan, Kilsyth.

Highland Heritage, Dalmally

The new Volvo B12BT coaches not only carry clan names, but other names and fleetnumbers, too. To avoid confusion arising from last month's report, the full list of vehicles with their names and numbers is as follows: 11 (SN05 DVVV, *Argyll, Clan Campbell*), 12 (SN05 DVX, *Locheil, Clan Cameron*), 13 (SN05 DVY, *Glenstrae, Clan MacGregor*), 14 (SN05 DVZ, *Glencoe, Clan MacDonald*), 15 (SN05 DWA, *Lorne, Clan MacDougall*), 16 (SN05 DWC, *Appin, Clan Stewart*), 17 (SN05 DWD, *The Bard, Clan MacIntyre*), 18 (SN05 DWE, *Glendochart, Clan MacNab*), 19 (SN05 DWF, *Duart, Clan MacLean*), 20 (SN05 DWG, *Balquhider, Clan MacLaren*), 21 (SN05 DWJ, *Inveruglas, Clan MacFarlane*), 22 (SN05 DWK, *Atholl, Clan Murray*), 23 (SN05 DWL, *Ferchar, Clan Lamont*), 24 (SN54 LRL, *Robert, Clan Bruce*), and 25 (SN54 LRO, *Bonnie Dundee, Clan Graham*).

Van Hool Alizée T9-bodied Volvo B10M-62s R779/80/4/5/8 WSB and Jonckheere-bodied B10M-60 Y139 KCS (LSK 504) were sold to Moseley (dealer), Glenmavis in February, followed by Neoplan Transliner-bodied Dennis Javelin 12SDA M902 OVR in March. New owners reported are Brogan, Ballymoney (R784 WSB); Mullany, Watford (R787 WSB); Nicoll, Laurencekirk (R788 WSB); and Cooper, Killamarsch (R789 WSB).

Highwayman, Errol

C53F-seated Bova Futura FLD12-270 L992 OGY was acquired in March ex-Hellyer, Fareham, and Plaxton-bodied DAF SB2300 D620 YCX was sold to EvoBus (dealer), Coventry at that time.

Leyland Titan B117 WUV has been repainted out of Stagecoach stripes into allover yellow.

Horsburgh, Pumpherston

Hourly, Monday to Saturday service 92 (Livingston bus station-Broxburn, East Mains Industrial Estate), started on 4 April, has been cancelled from 4 July.

Irvine, Law

FJ05 HXX is a second Caetano Nimbus B28F-bodied Alexander Dennis Dart, which was new in March. Plaxton Pointer B29F-bodied Dennis Dart SLF S461 LGN was also added to this fleet in March, having latterly been with Gibson, Renfrew.



Above: Last year, First Glasgow converted ECW-bodied Leyland Olympian 31524 (KGG 142Y) — already used as an exhibition vehicle — into The Deck, a mobile education unit to discourage children from vandalising its buses. PHIL HALEWOOD

Plaxton Excalibur-bodied Volvo B10M-62s X436/7 BTT (01 D 8068/83) were re-registered 123 TRL and GX 153 respectively in February, while similar Caetano-bodied M40 CLA was re-registered PSV 114 at the same time.

Irvine, Salsburgh

Alexander TE-bodied Leyland Tiger TRBTL11/2R MNS 10Y was sold for preservation last September.

Jay, Greengairs

Plaxton-bodied Volvo B10M-62 GSK 675 (Y759 THS) was sold to Moseley (dealer), Glenmavis in February.

Keenan, Coalhall

Alexander B53F-bodied Leyland Leopard PSU3D/4R TSJ 80S had been acquired for spares by last October, ex-Stagecoach Western.

Local, Greenock

Having been acquired well over a year ago, Mellor Duet-bodied Iveco 59.12 L942 CTT entered service in April in allover silver livery with LBC fleetnames.

Lothian LB

Plaxton President-bodied Dennis Trident 706 has been refitted with guide wheels for the Fastlink busway, and East Lancs-bodied Scania OmniDekka 999 has had preparatory work done to its chassis to allow the possible future fitting of guide wheels.

Volvo B7Ls 106/11/8/21/5 have been given an offside white contravention advert covering the middle windows and lower panels for the Royal Yacht Britannia tourist attraction at Ocean Terminal served by route 22.

McColl, Balloch

Fifteen MCW Metrobuses were provided on contract to Strathclyde Passenger Transport when its Subway service was withdrawn owing to strike action on Sunday 24 April. Three provided a Shields Road-Jamaica Street service, while the other 12 ran a shuttle between Partick and Govan to cope with football fans attending a Rangers v Celtic football match being played at Ibrox Stadium.

MacDonald, Cumbernauld

Jonckheere-bodied Volvo B10M-60 L117 SSL (KX1 244, L117 SSL, 8733 CD, L117 SSL) was acquired in March ex-Bruce, Salsburgh.

MacEwan, Amisfield

Plaxton Paramount 3500-bodied Volvo B10M-60 RAZ 8628 (G554 SSP) was sold last year and Wright Handybus-bodied Dennis Dart 9.8SDL K860 PCN passed to Midland Rider, West Bromwich in September.

McGill, Port Glasgow

SF05 HPJ is a new Alexander Dennis Pointer Dart delivered in March for use on Broomhill circular service 550. Alexander Dennis Enviro300 demonstrator PO54 NNM was on loan for a spell in March.

New, limited stop services due to start on 14 May were 501 (Gourock, Pierhead-Inveraray via Erskine and

Balloch), 502 (Gourock, Pierhead-Callander via Erskine and Drymen), 503 (Gourock, Pierhead-Stirling Castle via Erskine and Drymen), with 504 (Glasgow, Pollok Centre-Inveraray), 505 (Glasgow, Pollok Centre-Callander) and 506 (Glasgow, Pollok Centre-Stirling Castle) operating on the same routes from Erskine northwards due to follow on 26 May. These summer-only services will each offer one or two return trips on one day per week, and are likely to appeal to concession travel passengers who can travel free at present within the boundaries of any existing concession travel schemes. The Inveraray routes lie wholly within the Strathclyde scheme.

McKindless, Wishaw

Plaxton Premiere C53F-bodied Volvo B10M-60s 7195 BY (*K889 BRW*) and 52 GYY (*L53 CNY*) joined the fleet in January ex-Head, Lutton.

New service 62 (Glasgow Cross-Fairley) began on 21 April and does not operate on Sundays, contrary to previous reports. It was being operated initially by recently acquired Plaxton Pointer B34F-bodied Dennis Dart 9SDL L152/4-8 WAG, ex-Arriva London DRL152/4-8.

This company provided six MCW Metrobuses on contract to Strathclyde Passenger Transport on Partick-Govan and Shields Road-Jamaica Street Subway replacement services on 22 and 25 April.

Berkhof-bodied Dennis Lance 11SDAs M185/91 UAN were acquired by Avon, Prenton last October.

MacLean, Scarinish

The correct registration for the recently acquired Wadham Stringer-bodied Dennis Javelin 8.5SDA is M249 XWS.

MacPhail, Newarthill

Bova Futura coaches SA02 PAO, PBF have been given David Urquhart Travel and Caledonian Travel livery respectively.

Mackie, Alloa

Further to previous reports, Wright Eclipse Urban-bodied Volvo B7RLE FJ04 ETY is B44F and was acquired last October from Volvo (dealer), Warwick as a former demonstrator, while new Bova Futura 13.340 SN05 EOY is C57F.

Plaxton Paramount-bodied Ward Dalesman DLS 520Y (*SL 8417*, *WSC 785Y*, *YFS 438*, *CLS 709Y*) had been repainted into an allover red livery by April.

Marbill, Beith

SF54 HFT/U, Plaxton-bodied Volvo B12B coaches, which were new in September, were sold to Plaxton (dealer), Anston in December and passed to Garnett, Tindale Crescent in January.

Marshall, Baillieston

Van Hool-bodied Volvo B10M-62 R790 WSB has been repainted into Caledonian Travel livery.

Mathieson, Inverness

New Excel M16-bodied Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 413Cdi BU54 DEC had joined this fleet by December, its registration plates showing the number as BU 5 4 DEC.

Midland, Auchterarder

Sitcar Beluga C29F-bodied Mercedes-Benz O815D SN05 FHL and Van Hool Alizée T9 C49FT-bodied Volvo B12M SN05 FHM were new in April.

Van Hool Alizée-bodied Volvo B10M-62 JDS 77J (*P20 SOU*) was given back its original registration before being sold to Moseley (dealer), Glenmavis in April. Plaxton Beaver-bodied Mercedes-Benz 814D L318 HYP (*248 D 433*) was re-registered JDS 77J at that time.

Milligan, Mauchline

Frank Guy-bodied Mercedes-Benz 609D N614 GAH (*MIL 2979*, *N614 GAH*) was acquired by Walsh, Middleton last October.

Moffat & Williamson, Gaudry

SP54 FML, another Plaxton Profile C70F-bodied Volvo B7R, was new in January, and Optare Vecta B40F-bodied MAN 11.190 L670 PWT was acquired from MacEwan, Amisfield in March 2004 but has not been reported until now.

Van Hool Alizée-bodied Leyland Tiger TRCTL11/3RZs FSU 393 (*FSU 395*, *D231 HMT*) and FSU 395 (*FSU 393*, *D233 HMT*) were given back their original registrations in February, and D233 HMT was sold in March.



Above: One of several ex-Blazefield Dennis Javelins with Plaxton Interurban bodies in the Rapsons fleet is 486 (700 KXL) in the Orkney fleet. Beneath a brooding sky with a rainbow to the left, it is coming off one of the Churchill Barriers near St Mary's on a trip back to Kirkwall in March. The front grille is a modification by original owner Stagecoach Red & White, with whom it was registered M951 JBO. **J. F. BAKER**

Morrin, Glasgow

Owing to impending redevelopment, the operating centre for the Puma and Colchiri businesses moved in April by about a mile from Yorkhill Quay to Clydeholm Road, Whiteinch.

Alexander T-type C49F-bodied Leyland Leopard PSU3E/4R CRS 60T was sold in March for preservation at Bus World, Glasgow.

Morrison, Stirling

Plaxton C25F-bodied Mercedes-Benz 711D N167 DSP had been acquired by March, ex-Frome Minibuses, Frome.

Nicoll, Laurencekirk

Van Hool Alizée C53F-bodied Volvo B10M-62 R788 WSB joined this fleet in February ex-Highland Heritage, Dalmally and was immediately re-registered N3 CLL.

The de-registration of all Aberdeenshire Council school runs operated by this company appears to be as a result of a change of policy for the council. From the start of the 2005/06 school year, most schoolbus services will revert to being dedicated operations, as opposed to local bus services, except where they are already part of a local service.

Park, Hamilton

Jonckheere Millennium Mistral 50 C53F-bodied Volvo B12Bs HSK 641-4 and similar B12Ms LSK 501/2, 830-2/5/9/44/5, KSK 950-3, 2 HW were new in March. HSK 641-4 are in National Express livery; LSK 501/2 are in black and gold fleet colours; and LSK 830-2/5/9/44/5, KSK 953 are all-over white.

Jonckheere C53F-bodied Volvo B12M 2 WR was transferred from Trathens, Plymouth in January, followed by similar C51Ft-bodied LSK 506-8 in March.

Livery changes in February involved LSK 875 to Caledonian Travel ex-allover white; LSK 876/8/9 to all-over white ex-National Express; and LSK 877 to Scottish Citylink ex-National Express. LSK 506-8 were also given Caledonian Travel livery in March.

Volvo B12M coaches re-registered last October comprised SF04 SSZ to LSK 500, 12 HM (*2 HW*) to LSK 509 and LSK 509 to 12 HM.

Jonckheere Mistral 50-bodied Volvo B12Ms SA02 UCE (*HSK 642*) and SN02 NGP (*KSK 951*) were sold to Volvo Bus & Coach (dealer), Loughborough in February.

Prentice Westwood, West Calder

C57F-seated Bova Futura FHD13-340 SN05 FBE was new in March and was entered in the UK Coach Rally in April (see p23).

Rapsons Coaches RN

Plaxton Paragon C70F-bodied Dennis Javelin 542 (YX05 FEK) was new in April and has been allocated to Aviemore depot.

Recently acquired Wright Handybus-bodied Dennis Darts J610/23 KCU have been numbered 196/7 and the latter has been allocated to Fort William depot. Mercedes-Benz Vario O814Ds R937 AMB and S593 UPV have been numbered 001/4 and re-registered HRO 2Y, WIB 7085 respectively. Both have been repainted into blue and navy livery with 'Causeway Coaches' and 'Orkney' fleetnames respectively.

Former Causeway Coaches Van Hool Alizée-bodied Volvo B58-61 140 (WIB 7085, *WNR 536*, *TGD 759W*) and Plaxton-bodied Bedford YNT 141 (HRO 2Y) have been re-

registered TGD 759W and NST 61Y respectively.

Other re-registrations have involved Leyland National NL116L11/1Rs 133/4 (DOC 36/8V) becoming OSK 620/19V; Volvo B10Ms 407 (MIL 6675, *G810 BPG*), 409 (JAZ 9851, *G255 VPK*), 449 (GAZ 4632, *A157 PKR*), 467 (KLZ 2317, *J75 FPS*), 468 (KLZ 2316, *H410 DPS*), 659 (MXI 694, *T537 EUB*) and Dennis Javelin 492 (LTU 284, *S690 RWG*) reverting to their original marks; Volvo B10M-61 412 (JIL 3391, *CHN 587Y*, *3085 EL*, *ONV 647Y*) reverting to CHN 587Y; Volvo B10M-61 471 (RIB 8035, *B450 GCB*, *XTW 359*, *B471 UNB*) reverting to B450 GCB; Volvo B10M-61 472 (HDZ 5407, *NFL 881*) becoming B81 XFT; and Dennis Javelin 541 (L142 BFV) becoming PDZ 7762.

More repaints into blue and navy include Mercedes-Benz 811D 080, Dennis Darts 196/7, Bedford YNT 443/74, Bedford YMP 475, Bedford YNV 478 and Dennis Javelins 540/1.

Reid, Rhynie

Onyx C24F-bodied Mercedes-Benz 611D N239 CNM was acquired in March ex-Morrison, Stirling but is not in use.

Reliable, Johnstone

The Paisley Cross-Howwood service is to be withdrawn on 17 June when Gillen, Port Glasgow, will replace it.

Rennie, Dunfermline

Jonckheere C51Ft-bodied Volvo B10M-62 CCZ 5837 (*R442 LSC*, *98 KK 1562*) was acquired in February, ex-Edinburgh Castle Coaches.

Royal Mail

Service 133 (Muir of Ord-Strathconon) was cancelled from 27 May, followed by 219 (Kinross-Rumblingbridge) and 221 (Kirkmuir-Glen Prosen) from 1 June.

Scotbus, Inverness

Scotbus Ltd is a new operator licensed in February to run up to eight vehicles. First acquisitions comprise four former Preston Bus Leyland Atlanteans for school contracts on the Black Isle; East Lancs H50/36F-bodied AN68C/2Rs OBV 158/9X and similar AN68D/2Rs URN 168/70Y, which were numbered 158/9/68/70 by their previous owner.

The first commercial local service registered, Monday to Saturday 29 (Inverness, Union Street-Cromarty), started on 12 April. This was followed by Highland Council tendered service 30 (Inverness, Union Street-North Kessock) which was due to start on 9 May.

Scotguide, Glasgow

The Glasgow city tour operation is being expanded, with green Guide Friday branding reintroduced for tours using live guides and red City Sightseeing branding retained for tours with taped commentary. A notable addition to the fleet in April was C52 VJU, an MCW O63/22F-bodied MCW Metroliner DR130/22 new to Midland Fox in 1986 and latterly ML32 in Arriva's Original London Sightseeing Tour fleet.

MCW Metrobus BYX 189V has been repainted back into City Sightseeing livery in place of the blue and green advertising base colours received last year.

SD Travel, Whitburn

Mellor B27F-bodied Iveco Daily 59.12 N189 GFR was acquired last July ex-Stagecoach Devon 46396. A more recent addition is Plaxton Beaver 2-bodied Mercedes-Benz Vario O814D S11 BLU ex-Bluebird, Middleton.

Silver Fox, Renfrew

Duple C59F-bodied Scania K92CRB BXI 7437 (F159 DET) arrived in February ex-Barks, Bakewell.

Slaemuir, Port Glasgow

YF02 SKX/Z, the Strathclyde Passenger Transport-liveried Optare Solos which were acquired last September, are B33F-seated M920 examples previously with Lawrence & Harding, St Anns Chapel.

From 31 May, this company is to provide a Monday to Saturday daytime commercial replacement service X7 (Kilmacoll-Glasgow, Buchanan bus station via Bridge of Weir and the M8) for the similar First Glasgow service X7 withdrawn from 28 May.

Smith, Coupar Angus

New vehicles, here by April, are C49Ft-seated Bova Futura FHD12-340 SP05 CXX and Sitcar Beluga C33F-bodied Mercedes-Benz O815D SP05 CXY.

Southern, Barrhead

SJ05 SOU, new in April, is the fourth Plaxton Paragon C53F-bodied Volvo B12M to join this fleet.

Spa, Strathpeffer

Van Hool Alizée C59F-bodied Volvo B12BT SY54 CXF was new in February.

Spencer, Leven

Vehicles acquired last year comprised B49F-seated Leyland Lynx LX112TL11ZR1 E113 RBO ex-Hall, Kennoway in July and Dormobile B20F-bodied Ford Transit G470 CEH ex-Hendry, Glenrothes in October.

Stables, Newmill

Plaxton-bodied Leyland Tiger TRCTL11/2R NXI 608 (NDW 145X) had been sold by December.

Stagecoach Bluebird ST

Plaxton Interurban-bodied Volvo B10M-60s 52139 (K569 GSA, VLT 272, K569 GSA) and 52188 (L588 HSG) were loaned to Stagecoach North West in January to assist with the aftermath of the Carlisle floods, but after their return were sold to Plaxton (dealer) in February together with similar 52183 (L583 GSA).

From 2 May, Aberdeen city service 59 (Northfield-Balnagask) was revised to operate through Foresterhill Hospital and the Westburn Road corridor.

Stagecoach Fife ST

More Volvo Olympians re-seated by March comprised 16054, H51/34F ex-H51/28D; 16114/52/9/63/77, H49/31F ex-H49/30F; and 16154, H49/31F ex-H49/27D.

Stagecoach Glasgow ST

An unexpected development from this company is the proposed withdrawal of service 175 (Glasgow city centre-Castlehill) from 19 June.

Volvo Citybus 15296 was repainted into allover blue Magic Bus livery last November, but it had not been seen in service by April. Similar 15247 has been repainted from Megabus livery to Magic Bus livery.

Stagecoach Western ST

Further to last month's report, Wright Eclipse Commuter DP51F-bodied Volvo B7RLE demonstrator BP54 WYH was on loan from Wrightbus for a spell in February. Although not used by passengers, it was tested along the route of service 500 (Dumfries-Stranraer) on 9 February.

The latest recipients of the current corporate livery include Scania N113CRBs 28924/8; Mercedes-Benz 709Ds 40060/9/100; ex-Docherty Mercedes-Benz Varios 42019/22/3; and Volvo B10M 52360.

Stepend, Glenmavis

Additions by April were Alexander Sprint B31F-bodied Mercedes-Benz 811D J218 AET ex-Stagecoach 41718; Plaxton Beaver B31F-bodied Mercedes-Benz 811D L2 SBC last reported with Henderson, Hamilton; and Plaxton Beaver 2-bodied Mercedes-Benz Vario O814D SF54 HVZ. L2 SBC has been repainted allover white with blue fleetnames, but J218 AET is in use in purple and white.

Stewart, Dalavich

Although remaining in business, this company ceased local service operation after many years on 25 April when Oban & District took over the provision of service 415 (Dalavich-Oban via Taynult).



Above: Stagecoach Western 31387 (Y601 YSD), one of two Wright Crusader 2-bodied Volvo B6BLEs acquired last October with the bus operations of Docherty's of Irvine, on an Ayr local service. These are Stagecoach's only B6BLEs. **ARTHUR WOODCOCK**

Stokes, Carstairs

Van Hool Alicon T815 WSU 864 (D298 HMT, D167 HML) reverted to D298 HMT last October, allowing Berkhof Axial-bodied Volvo B10M KM02 GSM to be re-registered WSU 864 at that time.

Strathgait YF

Wright Renown B47F-bodied Volvo B10BLE 613 (R127 HNK) was acquired in March ex-Sovereign 127. It has been repainted into the blue rear coach livery and allocated to Dundee depot. Leyland Tiger 433 has also been repainted into that livery.

Stuart, Carlisle

Van Hool Alizée-bodied Volvo B10M-62 P273 XHS (LSV 380, P273 XHS) was sold to Moseley (dealer), Glenmavis in November.

Sweeney, Muthill

Renault Master CN04 XFW was new last August.

Telford, Newcastleton

Hawick-based Harrier Scenic services 502, 503 and 504 were cancelled from 12 May.

Thomson, Glasgow

B31F-seated Optare MetroRider MR15s L103/6 GBO, M116/29 KBO and N139 PTG were in stock by March, ex-Cardiff Bus 103/6/16/29/39. Four similar B25F-seated MR03 buses had been purchased from Wilson, Gourrock by April, including J967 BNL (Guernsey 19676, J967 BNL).

Travel Dundee NX

Service changes from 1 May included the withdrawal of 31 (City Quay-Trottick).

West Coast, Campbeltown

Four new Wright Cadet B39F-bodied VDL SB120s were delivered in April, part-funded by Hitrans. YJ05 PVF/K/L, PWU were to be repainted from dealer white into fleet colours before entering service, with three to be allocated to Dunoon and one to Oban.

Ikarus-bodied DAF SB220 R24 GNW has been repainted into fleet livery ex-allover white and Wright Cadet-bodied DAF SB120 Y801 WBT has been given the latest style of fleet colours.

The open-top conversion of Leyland Titan CUL 197V was completed in March and it started running tours of Oban over the Easter weekend, and from 29 April.

Optare MetroRider MR15 L100 WCM has been broken up for spare parts at Campbeltown depot.

As noted above, operation of Argyll & Bute Council subsidised service 415 (Dalavich-Oban) passed from Stewart, Dalavich to Oban & District from 25 April.

Westerbus, Gairloch

Van Hool Alizée-bodied DAF MB200 IIL 8580 (FSV 961, CGA 197X) passed to Stephenson, Workington last August.

Whitelaw, Stonehouse

Wright Crusader 2-bodied Volvo B6BLEs V453 NGA, V493 NOH and W673 WGG had been sold to Volvo Bus & Coach (dealer), Loughborough by February.

Wilson, Gourrock

In December 2003, this operator acquired a batch of Optare MetroRiders previously operated by Island Coachways or Island Games in Guernsey. They comprised B33F-seated MR01 61973 (J326 FPD); B29F-seated MR03 34518 (J960 DWX); B26F-seated MR03 19662, 24775 (H167/1 WWT); B25F-seated MR03s 19675-B, 29728 (J968/7/1/2/63 JNL); and 17314 (J216 BWU). 17314 and 19676 were given back their original registrations before entering service around last September, but it is understood that no others have been used. A more recent addition earlier this year was Plaxton Pointer 2 B39F-bodied Dennis Dart SLF IIB 3728 (S609 HGD) ex-Harte, Greenock.

With cancellation of the Greenock-Braehead service in March, all of the vehicles acquired for it had left the fleet by April. They comprised Park Royal-bodied AEC Routemasters JJD 432D, SMK 697F; Berkhof 2000-bodied Dennis Lance SLFs WIL 9216/7; (M966 SDP, M197 UAN); and Plaxton Beaver 2-bodied Mercedes-Benz Vario O814Ds SF54 OUW/X, the Routemasters having moved to Bus World, Glasgow. Optare MetroRider MR03 J967 BNL (19676, J967 BNL) had been sold to Thomson, Glasgow by April, together with three others not yet identified.

Harte, Greenock service HB2 (Greenock town centre-Burns Square via Auchmead Road) is to be cancelled on 19 June, but from April onwards this company was operating it on behalf of Harte.

Wishart, Friockheim NX

Made to Measure-bodied Mercedes-Benz 410D W303 (J223 HDS) was sold in February.

WJC Buses, Chapelhall

Alexander H47/37F-bodied Volvo Citybus B10M-50 G97 PES was acquired in April for a works contract. Although owned latterly by Hilton, Newton-le-Willows, it was previously Travel Dundee 97 and is still in that company's livery. It is to be numbered VV97 in this fleet.

Woods, Tillicoultry

New Unvi Esker-bodied Mercedes-Benz Atego 1223L SN05 DJY and similar Optare Solera-bodied YX05 DHP had both entered service by April.

This month's Century of Scotland's Omnibuses feature is incorporated into Pictureview on pages 36 and 37

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

M. Allan, J. Anderson, M. Anderson, D. Ansell, J. Baker, D. Booth, E. Cameron, N. Cram, C. Douglas, First Glasgow, Harte Bus Company, Lothian Buses, Midland Coaches, W. Milne, B. Nicol, S. Oliver, PSV Circle, renfrewshirebus@yahoo.com, scotlandbus@yahoo.com, sescotbus@yahoo.com, Stagecoach Bluebird, Stagecoach Glasgow, Stagecoach Western, R. Walter and A. Woodcock have contributed news items this month. Their assistance is gratefully acknowledged.

Where to send your Irish news reports

Reports on Northern Ireland operators, please, to:
**G. Irvine Millar, 54 Castlemore Avenue,
Belfast, BT6 9RG.**

Reports on Irish Republic operators, please, to:
**Ian Molloy, Willow Grove, Newtownpark Avenue,
Blackrock, Co Dublin,
or by e-mail to: ntpa@eircom.net.**

MAJOR OPERATORS

Ulsterbus

Other than three morning peak journeys into Belfast and three out again in the evening on weekdays, all train services between Belfast and Larne have been replaced by temporary bus service 763, which will operate for several months while major engineering work is undertaken. Reliability of the bus service is enhanced by being able to make use of traffic priority. Vehicles transferred from Metro to provide the service are Leyland Tiger/Alexander Q-types 1401-7/81 (WXI 1401-7, YXI 1481) and 2650 (SXI 2650), Volvo B7TL/Alexander ALX400 2954/5 (TCZ 9954/5) and articulated Mercedes-Benz O405GNs 3102/3 (DCZ 3102/3). The articles and B7TLs are on loan from Metro, while the others appear to be permanent transfers; 1406/81 are at Larne, the others at Newtownabbey.

Volvo B10M/Caetano Algarve II 512 (JAZ 5512) has moved from the driving school to Londonderry.

Accident damaged Leyland Leopard/Alexander 177 (VCZ 8661, VOI 177) has been withdrawn. More Bristol RELL6G/Alexander sold to Lough Swilly are 2592/3/5 (BXI 2592/3/5), while Mike Nash (dealer), Weybridge has similar 2440 (WOI 2440). Beattie (dealer), Hillsborough has taken open-top Leyland Atlantean/ECW 2911 (OXI 528, JYG 424V) for scrap, while another ex-Ulsterbus coach with McGonagle, Buncrana, Co. Donegal is Leyland Tiger/Van Hool 591 (JCZ 5225, OXI 521, A160 MNE).

News of three other ex-Ulsterbus Tiger coaches has come to hand. Wright Contour-bodied 538 (GXI 538) is 85 DL 2583 with Reddins, Muff, Co. Donegal, while similar ex-demonstrator Contour 540 (RXI 5540, B272 AMG) — sold in 1991 — is with Excel, Stansted. The next 540 in the fleet, Wadham Stringer-bodied driver trainer HAZ 3540 (64 KD 88), is with Eurotaxis, Siston Common, re-seated in 3+2 layout to DP70F, a modification that Ulsterbus considered shortly before its withdrawal in 2001.

Metro (formerly Citybus)

Alexander Dennis ALX400-bodied Volvo B7TL double-decker 2975 (BEZ 8975) is the latest and numerically last of the current batch of new double-deckers here.

As reported above, former City Express Leyland Tiger/Alexander Q-types 1404-7 (WXI 1404-7) have been transferred permanently to Ulsterbus for rail replacement duties. As part of a reshuffle following arrival of the new double-deckers, Volvo-powered Q-type Tigers 2636/8 (SXI 2636/8) were transferred to Newtownabbey for this work, but were returned within a few days.

More Bristol RELL6G/Alexander sold to Lough Swilly are 2512/6 (XOI 2512/6) and 2535/7/9/47/50/4 (AXI 2535 etc), while Mike Nash (dealer), Weybridge has taken 2522/33 (AXI 2522/33). Lough Swilly has also taken Leyland Tiger/Alexander N-type 2626 (NXI 4626), while the Belfast Royal Academy — a regular customer for former Citybus, Ulsterbus and Ulster Transport Authority vehicles for over 40 years — has hired similar 2625 (NXI 4625) following withdrawal of mechanically defective Bristol RELL6G 2457 (WOI 2457).

Q-type Tiger 2646 (SXI 2646) has lost its Guinness overall advertisement and is back in red/ivory Citybus livery.

Dublin Bus

Sports merchandiser Reebok has commissioned black/grey-based overall advertisements on four Volvo Olympians — Ringsend-based RA294, Donnybrook-based RV412, Summerhill-based RV515 and Phibsboro-based RV612.

The gradual rollout of new generation Wayfarer ticket machines continues at Ringsend where, in addition to route 49, routes 150, 201 and 202 have also been converted. Software bugs are believed to have delayed their system-wide introduction by weeks if not months.

Bus Éireann

Four regional garage/bus station buildings have been refurbished. At Skibbereen, a new three-bay garage and parking yard has been built. In Ballina, the terminal has been reconstructed with a six-bay front-loading arrival/departure area including upgraded wheelchair-accessible passenger waiting/toilet facilities. Similar reconstruction at Letterkenny has resulted in a four-bay terminal; buses no longer circumnavigate the former County Donegal Railway station buildings, which date from 1908, but the buildings have been integrated with the new bus station. Terminal facilities have been similarly upgraded at Monaghan, but buses still load as before (not facing building); there is, however, no need for them to reverse.

Protracted transmission problems with the new SP-class Scania/Irizar PB coaches has delayed the cascade of older Scania coaches to other work, with Stranorlar only releasing SC53/4 to Ballina and SC57 to Sligo. Surprisingly, we are reliably informed that the new Scania will also allow the company to withdraw six-year-old Mercedes-Benz O404/Hispano coaches MH3-12, which have been maintained to a high standard by staff at Athlone.

Ex-Go North East Optare Excels OP9, 10 are destined for Ballina, where one will replace Leyland Lynx LS145 on the Knock Airport shuttle, while OP11-4 are expected at Limerick.

The 20-year age limit for schoolbuses is likely to see a rapid end to the remaining GAC Rural Bus single-deckers. Recent withdrawals reported are of KS9, 11, 24, 31, 119/20 (EZV 9 etc). KS9, 11 are notable because, along with KS10/2-4, they were transferred from Limerick to Donnybrook in 1988 and painted into Dublin Bus two-tone green (KS11 was retrimmed internally in green rather than its original red/black). They also had KC-type front destination boxes fitted (to accommodate route numbers). They were the first of six earmarked for a network of routes from Bray into north Wicklow, but the company ran into staff resistance and the buses were returned to Bus Éireann. While at Donnybrook, they operated numerous private hires in the area.

OTHER OPERATORS

Aerdart DG

Dennis Dart DLA3 (01 D 34172) worked the final journeys on this shuttle service on 20 March. Officially, it has been suspended pending the conclusion of Dart 'Dash' engineering works in September and all the buses are in store.

Aircoach FG

As also reported in this month's News section, First Manchester rail replacement Scania K114/Irizar Century coach 23017 (YN54 APU) has been on hire, re-registered 04 D 72883.

Below: Lough Swilly has retained the Northern Ireland registration on 460 (NXI 4626), the ex-Metro Leyland Tiger with Alexander N-type body, which entered service on cross-border work in April. PAUL SAVAGE



City Direct, Galway

In early-April, step-entrance Dennis Darts 91 G 6760/84 were noted stored at Ensignbus (dealer), Purfleet.

Eirebus, Dublin

Early on 29 March, arsonists set fire to this company's Ballycoolin (Blanchardstown) depot, destroying BMC Falcons 04 D 34635/7/9, Van Hool Alizée 96 D 54248, MAN/Indcar Eco3 02 D 24616, and two Citylink-liveried Scania's.

Since early-May last year, the BMCs (plus 04 D 34633) that survived the attack because it was in a workshop building, worked the outer-suburban Urbus service linking Castleknock with Swords via Blanchardstown and Dublin Airport. After the fire, 04 D 34633 and an assortment of Eirebus and hired-in buses and coaches have maintained the service.

J.J. Kavanagh, Urlingford

Receipt of the 05-registered Setra S415-HD coaches has released most 99 and 00-registered Volvo B10M/Plaxton Premieres for disposal. On 18 March, the following were noted withdrawn in the Urlingford yard: 99 CW 1, 99 TS 1, 00 CN 1, 00 CW 1 and 00 TN 1. Also withdrawn and awaiting disposal was Caetano Enigma-bodied 99 WD 111. Additionally, Premiere 99 TN 1 has been noted in use with a Bus Éireann contractor (possibly Advance Coach Hire).

Lough Swilly

This cross-border company is anxious to replace its remaining ex-Clydeside Leyland Leopard/Alexander Y-types dating from 1979/80 and has acquired further Bristol RELL6G/Alexander single-deckers from Translink's Ulsterbus and Citybus fleets. The latest to arrive — all for schools services — are ex-Citybus XOI 2512/6 and AXI 2535/7/9/47/50/4, and ex-Ulsterbus BXI 2592/3/5. 458 (BXI 2569) — reported last month — has been re-registered 84 D 2349.

Also acquired from the same source is former Metro Leyland Tiger TRBLXB/2RP/Alexander N-type 460 (NXI 4626), for use on scheduled public services. It retains its Northern Ireland registration, as does DAF MB230/Plaxton Paramount 012 (AAZ 1670), which operates on the Letterkenny-Derry express. Although it has bases on both sides of the border and is entitled to operate vehicles registered in either Northern Ireland or the Republic of Ireland, Lough Swilly's school transport contracts are exclusively in the republic and buses used on them must be registered there. It has always registered vehicles in Northern Ireland since first running buses in 1930, but the proportion has decreased as the school operation has grown in importance.

Further to an earlier report, the Leyland Leopard acquired from Reddins, Muff for spares was 80 DL 649 (MRP 643V); its remains have since passed to Foley, Kinlough (breaker) for scrap.

BUSES CLASSIFIEDS

Copy deadline for July issue —
27 May 2005, on sale 17 June 2005

To place an advertisement, please contact **Kirsty Flatt** at
Ian Allan Publishing Ltd, Foundry Road, Stamford, Lincs PE9 2PP.
Telephone: 01780 484 630 Fax: 01780 763 388
E-mail: kirsty.flatt@ianallanpublishing.co.uk

BOOKS

Books Bought. Bus, Tram, and railway books, videos and DVDs always wanted. Keegan's Bookshop, Merchants Place, Reading RG1 1DT. Tel: 0118 9587253

Secondhand bus and commercial vehicle books bought and sold. SAE list, Falconwood Transport & Military Bookshop, 5 Falconwood Parade, The Green, Welling, Kent DA16 2PL. Telephone: 020 8303 8291. Email: falconw@globalnet.co.uk Open Thursday, Friday and Saturday

TAG FLEETBOOKS

NEW Major Operator Fleets F-M £13.00
including FIRSTBUS, GO-AHEAD, LONDON
UNITED & METROLINE with all subsidiaries

Others still available:-

Major Operators N-Z.....	£12.00
London.....	£15.00
South East.....	£12.00
South West.....	£12.00
East Anglia.....	£14.00
West Midlands.....	£14.00
Wales.....	£10.00
North West.....	£14.00
North East.....	£14.00
Scotland.....	£15.00
From Tag Publications, 36 POOLE ROAD, WEST EWELL, SURREY KT19 9SH p&p 90p on a single book please, multiples free	

Published 11 June

IPSWICH TROLLEYBUSES HULL TRAMWAYS

ALL BOOKS POST FREE UK
MAIL ORDER SERVICE

MP Middleton Press

EVOLVING THE ULTIMATE RAIL ENCYCLOPEDIA
Easebourne Lane, Midhurst, West Sussex, GU29 9AZ
Tel: 01730 813169 www.middletonpress.co.uk
Email: sales@middletonpress.co.uk Fax: 01730 812601

Announcements in these columns, including name and address, are charged at **50p** per word + VAT (min 20 words). Semi-display **£10.00** per single column cm (min 3cm) + VAT. Series discount on application semi-display only. Box number **£5.50** extra. Lineage advertisements to be prepaid.

Classified advertisements will be inserted in the first available issue after receipt, subject to availability of space.

Copy with remittance to the above address

EVENTS

Lemsford Hall, B653, Lemsford, Hertfordshire. June 5th 2pm - 4pm. Cheap models / books, photographs. **WANTED** Buses for rides / display. 01707 321422



SEATON TRAMWAY



Discover East Devon's glorious Axe Valley – by tram!
Open daily 19th March – 30th October 2005

Sat 11th June - 11th Annual Vintage Vehicle Rally
Wide range of Vintage Vehicles on display, vintage bus services,
Trade Stands. SAE for entry forms.

Sun 12th June - Gala Day
A full programme of special events, including cavalcade,
guided depot tours, Drive-a-Tram experiences.

Seaton Tramway, Harbour Road, SEATON EX12 2NQ
Tel (01297) 20375 Fax (01297) 625626
info@tram.co.uk www.tram.co.uk

SUNDAY, 26TH JUNE NORTH WEALD BUS RALLY

(NORTH WEALD AIRFIELD, NEAR EPPING ESSEX, ADJACENT TO M11, JUNCTION 7)

Billed as one of the South of England's premiere events, North Weald accommodates as many as **300 buses and coaches**, all on hard-standing, giving a good cross-section of vehicles that have worked throughout Great Britain in the past seventy-five years. **Old and new buses and coaches from all over the country are welcome to attend.** The Airfield is very easy to reach, being near to the M11 and M25 motorways.

The main themes for North Weald 2005 are **Farwell to the Routemaster** and **75 years of Green Line Coaches**. The rally also has a **Transport Enthusiasts Bazaar** of around 100 stalls selling a wide variety of bus and railway memorabilia, models, etc...

A REAL ALE Beer Tent and full refreshment facilities are provided. Try the Greenline 75 and the Routemaster delicacies. The rally opens at 10.30am and closes at 5.00pm, and supports a number of charities.

Admission charges - £7.00 (standard), £5.00 (concession) - senior citizen or registered disabled or passengers arriving aboard exhibits if tickets are ordered in advance). Up to eight people (including crew) aboard exhibits admitted FREE. All accompanied children under 16 also admitted FREE.

Please note all bazaar stalls must be booked in advance to satisfy insurance requirements.

Special bus service - 339 connects the Rally site with **Epping Station**, running every 15 minutes (10.15 - 11.10), then every 20 minutes until 15.50. Last bus leaves North Weald 17.10. Operated by Blue Triangle Heritage Fleet. Other special service will also serve the surrounding area. Day Rover £3, accompanied children free.

For full details, Please send a large, Stamped self-addressed envelope to - NLTS, North Weald Rally, 132, Moorfield, Harlow, Essex CM18 7QQ, or visit our website: nlts@sphosting.com

FOR SALE/WANTED

'Please note corrected price' Rural bungalow Lincolnshire (near Newark) plus barns, used for 20+ bus preservation for 20 years, oiro £300,000. 01522 778928, drjyoung@aol.com

MODELS

EFE / CORGI "OO" Latest models
Cheap 01707 321422

L.B. R.T.
LONDON BUS REPAIRS & TRANSFERS

4mm waterslide transfers for
London Transport Models

Visit our online catalogue

www.lbrt.me.uk

or send £1.50 in stamps for latest price list

LBRT PO Box 125, Hailsham,
East Sussex BN27 1WG

EFE & Corgi Models for sale.
Low prices. SAE for list. M Laws
79 Wordsworth Avenue, Yateley,
Hants. GU46 6YR

MISCELLANEOUS

PADDINGTON TICKET AUCTIONS

Specialists in Road and Rail Tickets and Ephemera

Thinking of selling your collection?
The best prices are usually obtained
in auction for top quality material.

Go to our website at:

www.paddingtonticketauctions.co.uk

for details, or speak to us
on 01234 327685

We hold at least four live auctions a
year and our colour illustrated
catalogue is available at least two
weeks before each auction
(subscription £14 for 4 issues).

PHOTOS

PHOTOBUS

**BUSES, TRAMS,
TROLLEYBUSES,
POST OFFICE VEHICLES
AND RAILWAYS**

Colour slides, Colour Prints
and Black & White Prints.
Our collection covers from
the early 50's up to the
present day.

Our collection covers the whole
of the United Kingdom and the
Continent.

Send £1.00 for details and
samples.

PHOTOBUS

**P.O. Box 24, Northleach Post
Office, Cheltenham GL54 3ZR
01285 720710**

Are you having a mid-life crisis?

BUSES magazine is the perfect platform to sell older bus & coaches to fleet operators and the preservation movement.
From the July issue we will be launching a new section tailored to the sale of mid-life PSV's.

For further details, please call Kirsty Flatt on 01780 484634

READING RAIL-BUS 2005

A Railway/Bus Collectors Fair

Saturday 4th June 2005

Rivermead Leisure Complex

Richfield Avenue, Reading

10.30am - 3.30pm

FREE Routemaster Bus from Reading Station

- Stand SA every 20 minutes from 9.30am

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| ◆BOOKS | ◆TIMETABLES |
| ◆PHOTOS/POSTCARDS | ◆PUBLICITY GUIDES |
| ◆POSTERS | ◆PAPERWORK |
| ◆MODEL RAILWAY/BUSES | ◆HORNBY/BACHMANN/LIMA |
| ◆KIT BUILT | ◆'N'-O' GAUGE |
| ◆COLLECTABLES | ◆HORNBY DUBLO/WRENN |
| ◆RAILWAYANA | ◆CAST IRON |
| ◆ENAMEL SIGNS | ◆CARRIAGE PRINTS |
| ◆LAMPS | ◆AND MUCH MORE |

If its railway or bus you may find it here!

Ample Parking

Refreshments

Enquiries / Stall Bookings: Tony Hillman **Tel: 020 8274 0811**

www.tobaz.co.uk

SOCIETIES

The MONTHLY NEWS SHEETS
of the

PSV CIRCLE

ARE SOMETHING YOU CAN
GET YOUR



INTO!

All new vehicles for all major and most smaller operators are reported in one of the nine geographical area news sheets published each month. Quarterly journals for (a) Overseas vehicles and (b) U.K. Preserved and former PSV's &c and much more

Write for FREE sample News Sheet to:
email: PSVCircle@aol.com

or write to: **PSV CIRCLE (BU06)**
14 Orchard Road, Hampton TW12 2JJ

WHEN YOU JOIN



YOU BECOME MORE THAN
JUST A MEMBER.

For full details + a copy of our newsletter send an A5 SAE to The Membership Secretary (B) 158 Yardley Fields Road Birmingham B33 8QX.

STORAGE

Storage available for double decker buses, lorries etc. 200 spaces available inside and outside. 24hr security. Prices start from £7 per week. Tel: 01568 797281. North Herefordshire.

VIDEOS

Red Rover Video

RM50 Special Edition @ £16 each

(running times approx 2 1/2 hrs with added footage)

Vol 1 With London RM's to 2217 } from 1994
Vol 2 With London RML's } to 2005

Vol 3 A tribute compilation
"Long live the Routemaster"

Vol 4 With Reading RM's last day.
Also available the Gravesend Rally 2004 £15.00

Cheques please to D.Kidby @ 33 Overstrand
Aston Clinton Aylesbury HP22 5NA details
E mail redrovervideo@rm-dk.fsbusines.co.uk

Tel: 01296 6306166

VEHICLES FOR SALE



CHL77 Daimler CVD6 1949 half cab coach, Daimler engine, pre-select gearbox. Willowbrook, Body. Good condition, 12 Months (PSV) Class 6 MOT. Call Wesley 0161 789 4545 or 07917 170 190. Selling due to lack of time.

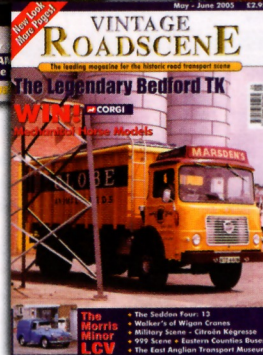


Routemaster RML 2293, CUV 293C Fully re-pannelled and repainted to original 'LT' colours. New batteries and fully serviced Cummins C Series engine, MOT and taxed until January 2006. Exceptional condition, work receipts available, and ready to go. Based Woking £13,500 ovno Ring Mike Nash 07836 656692 email nationalbus1@btconnect.com

WANTED

Books bought. See our ad under Books and Magazines. Keegan's Bookshop, Reading. 0118 9587253

Magazines for the Enthusiast



Available from your local newsagent or direct on subscription from:
Subscription Dept, Ian Allan Publishing Ltd, Riverdene Business Park,
Hersham, Surrey KT12 4RG Tel: 01932 266622 Fax: 01932 266633
E-mail: subs@ianallanpublishing.co.uk

£39.99	287.01	DAVID WHITE'S FIRST WIDEN	£14.99
	156.36	DAWS CASCADING	£14.99
	206.82	POINTER DART FIRST BROSSE	£14.99
	225.13	ALEXANDER Y THE SCENIC CHAMBER	£14.99
	273.09	LEYLAND TO CLOSED SAMUEL LEIGARD	£14.99
	274.14	WRIGHT VOODO DELANCE	£14.99
	28.35	GEORARD SOUTHWORN	£14.95
£39.99	299.03	WRIGHT DENNISANCE BADGERLINE	£14.99
	16.525	LEYLAND ATLANTIAN GREAT WARMOUTH	£14.99
	280.05	DAWLER DMS WESTERN SCOTTISH	£15.49
	279.01	DAWLER DMS BIG BUS	£16.99

Postage and packing included on orders over £10

Overseas, Islands & Highlands at cost.

P&P charge not refundable.

This advert expires on June 20th 2005

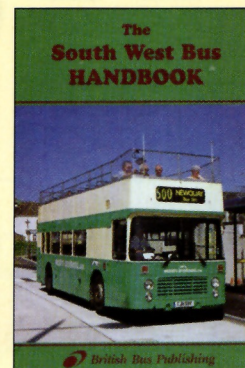
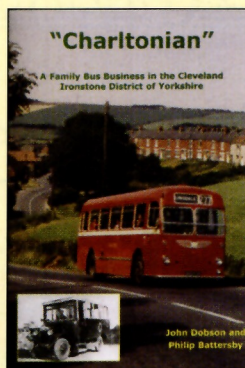
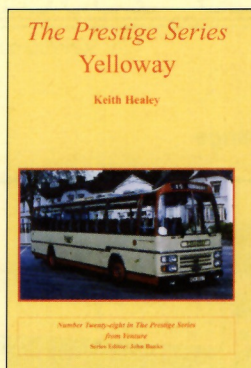
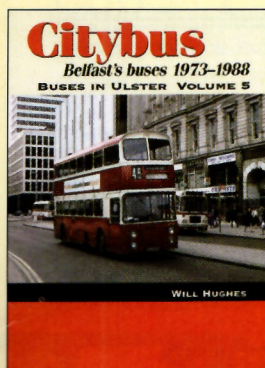
New Release prices
 are pre order prices only. Items
 are subject to availability

Special Offer prices apply to Mail Order sales only

**We also have branches at Bicester, Oxford
 and Milton Keynes**

£39.99

NEW TITLES NOW AVAILABLE FROM MDS BOOK SALES

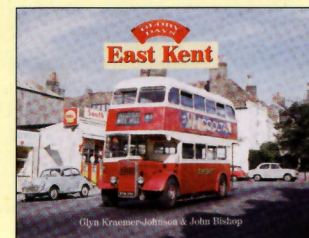
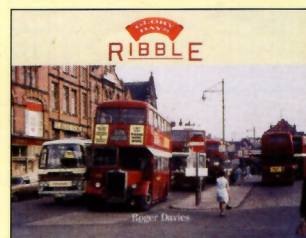
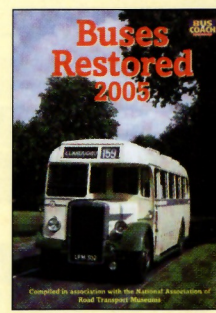
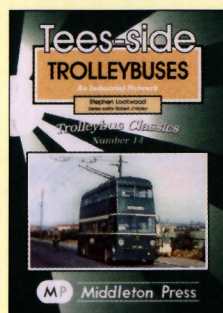
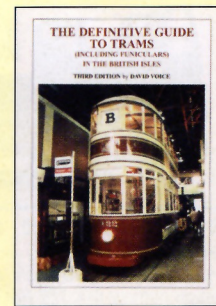
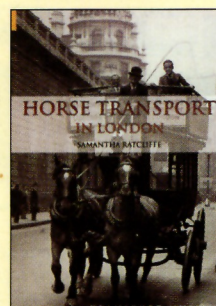
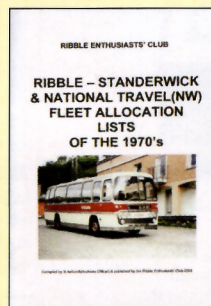
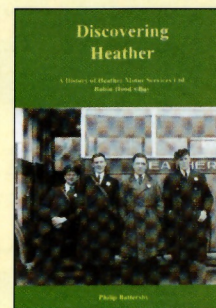
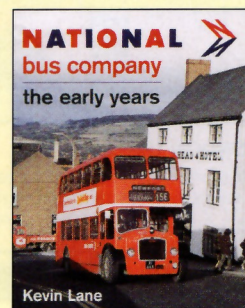
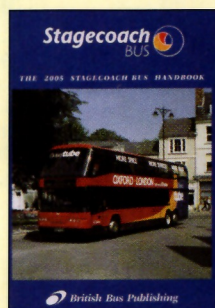


DUE THIS MONTH

Go-Ahead Bus Handbook	£12.75
Historic Bus Profiles	
7 Northern Counties Utility d/d	£9.95
8 Northern Counties Post War 45-55	£9.95
9 Duple Post War d/d	£2.95
Prestige Series No.30 Yellowway	£9.50
2005 First Bus Handbook	£16.75
South East Bus Handbook 2005	£16.25
Stagecoach 1980-2005	£16.99
London Transport Green Line	£22.00
ColourScene East Kent & M&D 1970-85	£19.95

NOW AVAILABLE

Super Prestige	
9 Sentinel Buses	£18.95
8 West Riding 2	£16.95
7 Cambridge 1	£16.95
Prestige Series	
No.29 Growing up With Buses	£9.50
No.28 United Counties	£9.50
Historic Bus Profiles	
4 Post War Brush Bodies	£5.95
3 Guy Bodies	£5.95
Alexander Leyland Connections	
1 DUT-CIE	£9.95
2005 Stagecoach Bus Handbook	£16.25
Buses in Colour 1 Eastern Counties	£9.95
Buses in Ulster 5 Belfast Citybus 1973-88	£18.00
Buses of Bermuda	£14.95
Buses Restored 2005	£14.99
Charltonian	£4.75
Classic Bus Year Book 11	£14.99
Discovering Heather - Heather Motor Services	£8.95
Glory Days: Ribble	£16.99
Glory Days: East Kent	£16.99
Horse Transport in London	£12.99
London Transport in Colour 1950-69	£14.99
Major Bus Operators F-M	£13.00
Major Bus Operators N-Z	£12.00
National Bus Company Early Years	£16.99
Ribble & Standerwick/National Travel	
Fleet lists 1970s	£5.00
South West Bus Handbook 2005	£15.75
Tees-side Trolleybuses	£14.95
Wheels Around Dublin	£7.99
Wheels Around Dunfermline & West Fife	£7.99



SPECIAL OFFER

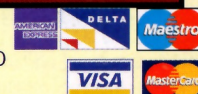
£5 discount voucher against a future order for every customer placing an order from this advert.

POSTAGE

All orders over £40 supplied post free to a UK address otherwise add 10%, minimum £1.50
Overseas please add 20% surface or 40% airmail

This is just a selection of the many titles we have in stock. Send SAE for our latest list, or call in at our shop at 128 Pikes Lane Glossop.
Open Mon-Fri. 9:30 - 6pm and Sat 9:30-4:30pm. We also offer a book search service. Tell us what you want and see if we can help.

MDS BOOK SALES (DEPT 80605) FREEPOST SK2162 GLOSSOP DERBYSHIRE SK13 8EH ☎ 01457 861508



NEW

Exclusive
First
Editions

RELEASES ISSUE 4 2005

1:76 Scale/00 gauge precision diecast models

Details May Be Subject to Change



29607 Leyland Olympian LONDON UNITED

The London United livery suits this style of vehicle creating a fresh clean appearance. Route branded for the 140 Heathrow service, fleet number L296, registered G296 UYK is heading for Heathrow Airport.

APRIL RELEASE ☐



99200 AEC Regal 10T10 LONDON TRANSPORT

Repainted into London country service livery T651 was transferred to bus duties creating a unique livery variation. Working route 413a to The Square, Chipstead. Registration number EYK 286 has masked lamps and white visibility markings to the front & rear.

MAY RELEASE ☐



99202 Daimler Utility LONDON TRANSPORT

Carrying few adverts and painted in a muddy brown this Daimler registered GYE 64, fleet number D 74 features the blackout visibility markings and has anti splinter film on the windows and is seen operating route 137 to Highgate.

MAY RELEASE ☐



15002 Leyland National Mk I Long BRIGHTON & HOVE

Seen in the traditional Brighton Hove & District style livery to celebrate their 50th anniversary. Our Leyland National registered UFG 51S, fleet number 51, working route 36A to Brighton Old Steine, interestingly carries its green colours beneath the legal lettering, a reminder of past times in its history.

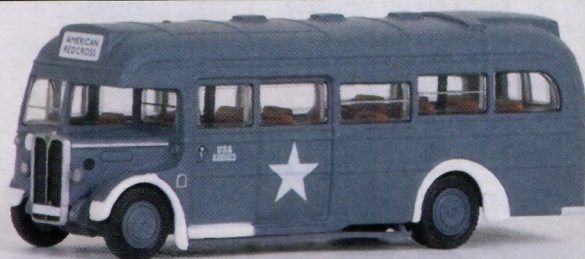
JUNE RELEASE ☐



30901 AEC MKIII Flatbed & Trailer BRITISH ROAD SERVICES

The second release of our modified AEC Mk III casting depicts British Road Services vehicle registration number EVH 23, Lorry & Trailer number 42 D 107 from the Huddersfield Depot, carrying a crated Church organ as a back load from Huddersfield to the docks for shipping to it's final destination, Cape Town.

MAY RELEASE ☐



99201 AEC Regal 10T10 U.S. ARMY RED CROSS

Many 10T10's were transferred from London Transport to the U.S. Army where they were put to a number of different tasks. This vehicle, USA X201123, was used as the route blinds suggest by the American Red Cross for Ambulance work.

MAY RELEASE ☐



99203 Guy Arab II Utility LONDON TRANSPORT

With East London taking the brunt of the bombing, some new buses were put immediately into service painted only in grey undercoat with visibility markings. Registration number GXE 571, fleet number G131 operates route 23 to Marylebone.

MAY RELEASE ☐



24904 Mercedes Minibus SOUTH WALES TRANSPORT

For our collectors of Welsh liveried buses, this Mercedes Minibus of South Wales Transport looks very attractive indeed. Registration number F320 AWN, fleet number 320 is operating route 6 to Port Tennant near Swansea.

JUNE RELEASE ☐

Keep up to date with all our model release information by joining our Subscription Service for an annual fee of £6 (U.K.) or £12.00 (Overseas)
Send stamps, cheque or postal order to:

Exclusive First Editions, 32 Woodall Road, Enfield, EN3 4LG